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GOLF AND GOLFERS

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GOLF.

By HORACE G. HUTCHINSON.

With Contributions by LORD WELLWOOD, SIR WALTER SIMPSON, Bart., The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, M.P., ANDREW LANG, H. S. C. EVERARD, and others.

With 32 Plates and 57 Illustrations in the Text by THOMAS HODGE, HARRY FURNISS, and from Photographs.

SIXTH EDITION, THOROUGHLY REVISED.

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HINTS ON THE GAME OF GOLF.

By HORACE G. HUTCHINSON.

TENTH EDITION, ENLARGED.

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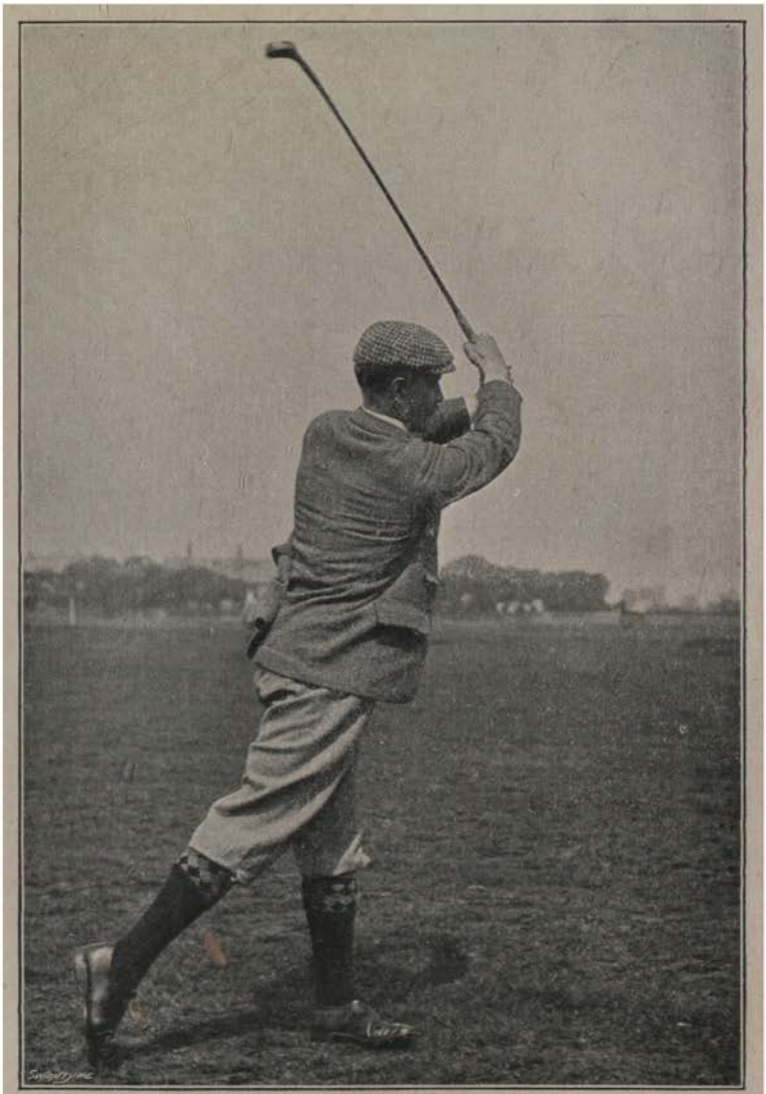
Edinburgh and London: WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS.



Mr. F. G. Tait, at Finish of Swing.

THE BOOK OF GOLF AND GOLFERS

BY

HORACE G. HUTCHINSON

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY

MISS AMY PASCOE

H. H. HILTON, J. H. TAYLOR, H. J. WHIGHAM

AND

MESSRS SUTTON & SONS

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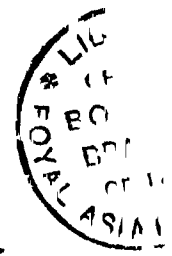
WITH 72 PORTRAITS



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PREFACE

TO

THE FIRST EDITION

It may well be said that of the making of books about golf there is no end, that we have had enough of them—maybe too many—already. Partly that is true, and partly it is on account of its truth that the writer ventures to essay yet another book on the great and inexhaustible subject. It is not because it is inexhaustible that this book commends itself to the indulgence of the public, but partly because so much has been said about golf in so many books, so that it seemed time for some book to pick and steal from all these diverse sources and gather grain into one book; and partly, this book is inspired—let no one rashly cavil at the term, for there are founts of inspiration both celestial and the reverse—by a desire to set forth golf 'as she is played' under a new guise—not aiming at the purely didactic ends of elementary instruction which are the professed aims of several previously published volumes, but rather aiming to set before the world a gallery of golfing pictures, exhibiting eminent players engaged in those strokes which seem to be most characteristic and to have served them best in attaining that eminence. From a study of these pictures, and from the observations that the writer has permitted himself thereon, it is to be hoped that both instruction and amusement—

Sandford-and-Merton-like phrase!—may be reaped; for if we can find out exactly how it is that these eminent fellows arrived at their elevation, what in the world is to prevent our joining them there?

A goodly portion of the book is thus occupied. For the rest we are indebted for most valuable assistance, first, in courtesy, to Miss Pascoe; and in this regard let a word be said to those golfers of the Tory school who object 'on principle' to 'women on the links.' Their objection, according to their lights, is a perfectly sound one. It is their lights that lead them astray. These lights seem to show them woman on the links as a talkative, irresponsible person, without real knowledge of the game or real interest in it, treating the solemn matter as if it were a mere affair of a game of croquet at a garden party. This may have been the light in which women on the links really appeared in the generation of the Tory golfer; but that generation is passing away, and being succeeded by another in which woman yields nothing in golfing interest and knowledge to the most crusted golfer of the other sex. Her enthusiasm even passes his; she is as keen and alert in regard to every point of the game as any male golfer ever can be, and in point of execution she is often quite the equal of some of those who would have her removed from the green. As for talking or moving 'on the stroke,' such an enormity is quite unthinkable for her. In fine, she is capable of being as good a golfer, in the most complete sense of the phrase, as any man.

Appearing, therefore, in this new light she has no need to ask for sufferance, she has only to claim her right to play on the links with the best. If she be not as long a driver as some men we know, she is at least as long as many of those

that are described as 'good partners in a foursome,' and she is herself often as 'good a partner in a foursome' as any of her critics. With this justification, therefore—it would be incorrect and impertinent to speak of it as an apology—the chapter on ladies at golf may safely stand on its own merits. It is only to open the Tory eye to the dawn of the new light that the justification is necessary—certainly not that the golfing ladies' cause, through any weakness of its own, requires it.

The merits and qualifications of the writers who have aided in this work are too well known to need more than the barest mention. Miss Pascoe is a late winner of the ladies' championship. Mr. Hilton has twice won the open championship, which only one other amateur has ever won. Taylor has also twice won this great distinction, twice in succession; and in the third successive year was only beaten by Harry Vardon after a tie. Mr. Whigham is ex-amateur champion of the United States, though by birth and golfing education a true Scot, and if the opinions of those who have proved their worth in golf so fully as these have proved it are not worth hearing, for whose opinion shall we wait?

It may be said that there is too much of England and too little of Scotland in this book of Scotland's national game—that it is mainly English, whereas it should be mainly Scotch—only one Scotsman, indeed, bearing a hand in it, and his handiwork dealing with American, rather than British, golf. But this is surely rather narrow criticism. We of England are very ready to subscribe ourselves British rather than English, embracing Scotland with a good heart—we are all grateful to Scotland for giving us her game; we have no national jealousy in the matter. Why should

she? Has she? We believe not. It is not Scotsmen, but only those who take on themselves, with little right, to speak for Scotsmen that would claim it for her.

An apology we do owe to America for the comparatively brief notice of her golf—a notice that we cannot admit to be inadequate in kind, but only in degree inadequate—altogether too meagre, and in point of length quite unworthy of its subject. Unfortunately our own selfish British point of view has engrossed us so as to leave only too few pages for the golf in the States, to which we should have wished to devote many more. An apology is all that we can offer. It is our loss, rather than America's, that we have not space to repair the deficiency.

Messrs. Sutton & Sons, the celebrated seedsmen of Reading, have been kind enough to write a chapter on the proper treatment and laying out of greens on different soils, with the different grass seeds appropriate to each, and possibly J. H. Taylor's chapter on practical club-making will turn the thoughts of many to the advantage and interest of making their own clubs.

H. G. H.

March 1899.

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GOLF AND GOLFERS

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL

I CANNOT find, after some diligent searching, that there is much to be said of the early history of Golf in addition to what was said so well in the first edition of 'Golf, a Royal and Ancient Game,' by the late Mr. Robert Clark. This fine work was first published nearly a quarter of a century ago. He himself—republishing his book, of which the first edition had then been long exhausted—in 1893, shortly before his lamented death, expresses regret that the interval of eighteen years had given to his research no new matter throwing any light on the great game's early history. We do not know at what remote date the game was first played in Scotland, whether it was indigenous or introduced from over-sea, but there is some strong evidence that a pastime from which the name 'golf' is derived was played at an early date in Holland, and also evidence that golf balls were made in Holland and imported into Scotland in 1618. In the latter regard, Mr. Clark quotes from a letter dated August 5, 1618, at Salisbury, that whereas 'no small quantitie of gold and silver is transported yierlie out of his Hienes kingdome of Scotland for bying of golf ballis,' therefore 'his Majesty confers a monopoly of ball-manufacture on James Melvill, "for the spaice of twentie ane yeiris," but lest the said James Melvill should become an extortioner, it was provided that

the cost of each ball "exceid not the pryce of four schillingis money of this realm." ' Further, a stamp was to be placed on each golf ball thus made, to prove its native manufacture. All without this mark were to be 'escheated.'

This plainly shows two facts—that golf was a very popular game at that date (1618), otherwise the 'quantitie of gold and silver' would not have been aptly described as 'no small;' and also, that Holland must at the same date have been playing a game for which the balls were identical with those used in Scotch golf—'feather' balls, almost certainly. Further, again by way of evidence, there is the etymology of the name 'golf,' derived from German 'Kolbe'= club, becoming 'kolf' in the Low Dutch, which in the Low Dutch guttural pronunciation would be almost exactly 'golf.' It is true that the Dutch game called 'Kolf' has no resemblance whatever to our golf, being played in a barn and on principles that connect it more nearly with croquet, though not too nearly even with this, than with golf. Yet in certain Dutch pictures we find illustrations of persons playing a game with ball and club, and certainly not in a barn—on the ice by preference, but sometimes also on the open sward—that looks as if it had a kinship with golf. The principal difference is that the players are aiming at a stick, or peg, rather than 'holing out;' but this may have been for lack of true putting greens. The game that is illustrated on the Dutch tiles may be taken from the indoor or the outdoor game equally, for the majority of them do not show a background to inform us on this point. There is a notable exception in the large plate illustrations in the Badminton book on golf—a plate lent for the purpose by Mr. Laidlaw Purves. Here the game progresses on the ice. In either case, however, the club—Kolbe, or Kolf—is used, and it seems allowable to conjecture that there may have been two forms, an indoor and outdoor form of the game, both of which may have borne the name Kolf, though differing by reason of the different conditions under which they are played.

It does not seem that we can really arrive much nearer than this at the root of the matter. Certain continental games that show some affinity with golf, such as the 'crosse' played in Normandy, the 'jeu de mail,' which seems more peculiar to the South of France, and the 'chole' of French Flanders. For the rest, all seems to be mere conjecture, and it is wiser to return to the safer ground of recorded fact.

The oldest mention recorded seems to bear date March 1457, when the Scotch Parliament 'decreeted and ordained that wapinschawingis be halden by the Lordis and Baronis spiritual and temporale, foure times in the yeir, and that the Fute-ball and Golf be utterly cryit doune, and nocht usit; and that the bowe merkis be maid at ilk paroche kirk a pair of buttis, and schutting be usit ilk Sunday.'

This is the earliest mention found, but its manner is significant as showing the great hold that the game must even then have possessed on the popular favour if it was necessary that it should be forbidden by Act of Parliament in order that the king's lieges might have leisure from it to pursue the practice of archery as a defence against 'our auld enimies of England.' The last quoted words appear in an Act of May 1471, which had the same general tenor as the one above quoted, including the clause that 'Fute-ball and Golfe be abusit in tyme cuming.' Again, in May 1491 a similar prohibition was fulminated against golf by the Parliament. For all that, in the early days of the sixteenth century, Mr. Clark notes that the king himself broke his own behest, convicting him from the Accounts of the Lords High Treasurers of Scotland, which contain sundry entries of the king's expenses for 'Golf Clubbis and Ballis.'

The final words of the Act first quoted—viz. 'ilk Sunday'—have a significance in view of the frequent indictments on record about the end of the sixteenth century and beginning of the seventeenth against persons who broke the Sabbath by playing Gowff (such is now the orthography) on that day.

There were terrific struggles about the beginning of the

seventeenth century between the authorities and the Sabbath breakers, the Town Council of Edinburgh, in 1592, making proclamation against the doing of all sorts of dreadful things on the Sabbath, such as 'drynking in tavernis, or otherwayes at Golf,' &c. And in several separate sentences, of date from 1604 to 1650, various persons were admonished, fined, put in stocks, deposed from the office of deacon, &c., for playing golf on the Sabbath, and especially 'the tyme of the sermonnes.' One of these profane persons, curiously enough, who was imprisoned for this offence in 1608, was named Bogie—Pat Bogie—no doubt an ancestor of the Colonel of that name that vexes our peace so often in the golf greens of to-day.

However, when James VI. came back from Scotland he 'rebuked the precise people and declared his pleasure to be that after the end of divine service our good people be not disturbed, letted, or discouraged from any lawfull recreation —such as dauncing, either men or women, archerie for men, leaping, vaulting, or any other such harmless recreation, but prohibiting the said recreations to any that are not present in the church at the service of God before their going to the said recreations.'

Later, in 1633, Charles I., pious son of pious father, reiterates this injunction with the like qualification, commands justices of assize 'to see that no man doe trouble or molest any of our loyall and duetifull people, in or for their lawfull recreations, having first done their duetie towards God.'

On this whole subject, which has acquired a greater interest now, owing to the prevalence of Sunday golfing in England, and even in parts of Scotland, Mr. Clark has the following note, which fairly sums up the whole position: 'The inference from all this is curious enough. In 1547 it is expressly enacted by the Scottish "Lordis and Baronis, spirituale and temporale," that "*schutting be usit ilk Sunday.*" In the century following, it is plain from the terms of the edicts that the practice of Golf, though held sacrilegious

on Sunday in *tyme of preaching—the tyme of sermonnes*—was at other times of the day at least tolerated. The rigid Sabbatarianism of Scotland—now much modified, and in course of being more so—is thus plainly of comparatively modern growth. John Knox and the early Reformers knew nothing of it.'

The modern fashion knows no such wise temperance—either golfers golf all the Sabbath through—time of sermons notwithstanding—or else do not golf at all on that day and hold up their hands in pious horror at those that do.

It is difficult for a whole-souled golfer to reconcile the addiction of the royal family of Stuart for golf with their unsatisfactory character in some other particulars. Prince Henry, eldest son of James VI., was a golfer. Mary Queen of Scots was so devoted to it that she 'was seen playing golf and pallmall in the fields beside Seton' a few days only after Darnley's murder—showing a very well-merited indifference about his fate; but 'the fields beside Seton' does not read like the description of a first-class links. Perhaps, after all, it was only a form of penance. Charles I. is represented in an historical picture receiving the news of the outbreak of the Irish Rebellion in 1642 while engaged in a golf match on the links of Leith—monstrous lack of discretion in the messenger to interrupt the match with such tidings! and monstrous sin of omission in the chronicler that he tells us nothing of how the match stood at the time. Perhaps the king was down, for he made it an excuse for breaking off the game and driving straight to Holyrood. James II., as Duke of York, was a keen golfer, and in partnership with one John Patersone, a shoemaker, defeated two English noblemen in an important match, and as a token of gratitude gave the shoemaker half the stakes, which must have been considerable, for the man built himself therewith a house in Canongate. Why does not the royal family of our day play golf more earnestly? We might have many houses in the Canongate.

It is recorded that a certain Bishop of Galloway, while engaged in 1610 in a game of golf ('for he loved that all his lyfe time verie much'), saw a vision, apparently quite unconnected with the incidents of the game, that affected him so much that he 'went home trembling, tooke bed instantlie, and died, not giving any token of repentance for that wicked course [excess of golf playing, apparently] that he had embraced.'

The great Montrose was an ardent golfer, at Leith, St. Andrews, and at Montrose itself, where he played in a match the day before his wedding, and again actually on the very day of his marriage as soon as the ceremony was over—a masterful man.

Mr. Clark, from whose work most of the above particulars are borrowed, has a very interesting anecdote of the Rev. Dr. Alexander Carlyle, Minister of Inveresk, near Musselburgh. He was a 'mighty swiper.' 'In 1758,' says Mr. Clark, 'while in London, he' (the Reverend Doctor) 'was invited to dine with Garrick at his house in Hampton, along with John Home, author of "Douglas," Dr. Robertson the historian, Parson Black from Aberdeen, and others. Garrick had told us,' Mr. Clark goes on (now quoting the words of Dr. Carlyle's autobiography), 'to bring golf clubs and balls, that we might play at the golf on Molesley Hurst. We accordingly set out in good time, six of us, in a landau. As we passed through Kensington, the Coldstream regiment were changing guard, and, on seeing our clubs, they gave us three cheers in honour of a diversion *peculiar to Scotland*' (these words are italicised by the present writer, as especially to be observed), 'so much does the remembrance of one's native country dilate the heart when one has been some time absent. The same sentiment made us open our purses, and give our countrymen wherewithal to drink the "Land o' Cakes." Garrick met us on the way, so impatient he seemed to be for his company. Immediately after we arrived, we crossed the river to the Golfing ground,

which was very good' (again a notable sentence). 'None of the company could play but Home and myself and Parson Black. . . . After dinner, Garrick ordered the wine to be carried to a temple in the garden. Having observed a green mount opposite the archway, I said to our landlord I would surprise him with a stroke at the golf, as I should drive a golf ball into the Thames, once in three strokes. I had measured the distance with my eye in walking about the garden, and accordingly, at the second stroke, made the ball alight in the mouth of the gateway and roll gently down the green slope into the river. This was so dexterous that he was quite surprised, and begged the club of me by which such a feat had been performed.'

A suitable achievement, truly, 'after dinner,' and an eloquent eulogium on the good doctor's golfing skill and temperate habit, even if his manner of telling it does not impress us with any sense of his great modesty; but the main interest of the whole story—from the present, the historical, point of view—is beyond doubt contained in those two italicised passages, of which the one speaks of golf as a diversion 'peculiar to Scotland' and the other describes the golfing at Molesley Hurst as 'very good.' Now the Reverend Doctor was famous as a 'mighty swiper'—there is strong testimony, from the good spirits in which he tells the anecdote of his post-prandial *tour de force*, that he had won his match—but for all that it was a considerable concession on the part of a Scotchman, used to the links of Musselburgh, less careworn then than to-day, to affirm that this golfing on Molesley Hurst was 'very good.' Such an admission is at all events only consistent with the assumption that the ground had been specially prepared, and was constantly used, for golf. But how are we to reconcile this with the Doctor's previous statement that the game was 'peculiar to Scotland'? Perhaps we are not to take the latter statement exactly by the letter, and it certainly does look as if there was a golf course established at Molesley Hurst in 1758. The unfortunate thing

is that the establishment does not continue to exist, neither are there, so far as some diligent searching has enabled us to discover, any extant records beyond these here contained of its existence at any time. Still greater, however, is our difficulty in reconciling this statement of the Reverend Doctor with the establishment of the golf course at Blackheath, to which tradition assigns 1608 as the date of its inception.

After all, it is but tradition, and we are here concerned with history. The game of golf played at Molesley Hurst in 1758 is the earliest match on record on English soil. Blackheath records begin with the year 1766, at which date we find that a silver club was given to the golf club at Blackheath by a Mr. H. Foot. At this time, and for many years later, the club played on the heath in summer only, and on a course of five holes—that being the number then in use on the Leith links, from which there is no reasonable doubt that Blackheath golfers took their number. The silver club aforesaid bears the record of its own antiquity engraved upon itself, but the first written records of golf on Blackheath bear date 1787, and are in the form of a list of the club's members entered in the cash book of the chocolate house at Blackheath. It is ever to be regretted that the old minute books, which would have formed an invaluable treasure house of the history of English golf, were lost in a destructive fire. A similar loss overtook cricket history in the destruction by fire of old Lord's pavilion. It seems as if the muse of history had a grudge against intelligent research devoted to records of physical pastimes. All the names in the list of the cash book of the chocolate house are Scotch in sound, and it is to be noticed that the spelling of golf at this period has degenerated into 'goff,' golfers have become 'goffers,' so that it appears that the origin from Low Dutch 'kolf' had been forgotten temporarily. We are not told whether this 'chocolate house' was another name for 'temperance hotel,' but in any case the club seems to have left it soon.

The next work that takes up the history of the club is

the bet book, in which most of the bets recorded take the form of gallons of claret. Claret was a great drink in Scotland in those days of her closer intercourse with France, and doubtless these pious Scots brought loyal palates south with them. But all this while they played only in summer, until in 1789 a club was formed that was curiously named the Knuckle Club, whose members used to meet 'to discuss a dish of soup and knuckles, particularly beef ones.' This was the ostensible purpose of its existence, but incidentally its members met to play golf on the heath during the winter months. In 1825 the Knuckle Club—whose ceremonies seem to have been of an interesting and childish nature, such as holding a knuckle in the hand while making an after-dinner speech, &c.—resolved itself into the Blackheath Winter Golf Club, and so continued for a space of nineteen years; at the end of which time—namely, in 1844—it dissolved its existence by a kind of Buddhistic incorporation with the older, the Summer Golf Club, the seasonal names ceased, and the present club, playing all the year, was born. By way of a kind of incorporation fee, the winter club, on its dissolution, gave its challenge medal to the older club.

This is a briefly checked-off account of the chief incidents in the Blackheath Club's history. Mr. W. E. Hughes has compiled at length a history of the club that is a real labour of love and an excellent literary achievement, occupying a handsome volume, and those who want fuller details should refer there; and if the reputation of Blackheath for the immense antiquity of its golf club have come out just a little smirched—or if not that, at least without being able to show any extract from the register in support as proof of its year of birth—at all events the suspicion cast on it is a purely negative one. The club has a tradition that it was inaugurated in 1608. As a tradition we have no stone to throw at the claim, and for tradition we can ask no proof —only, when Blackheath begins to speak of her prodigious age as a matter of historical fact, then she does justify

us in asking for a bit of proof, and so far we cannot find that she has produced it.

But at Blackheath, golf, whenever established, held its own, and a little more than its own, growing in favour so that the summer golf, from the first Saturday in April to the first Saturday in November, ceased to be enough for it, and it had to invent its Knuckle Club, and then its Winter Golf Club to fill the gap. But in Scotland we do not find that the game had been making any great progress in popular favour. On the contrary, it had without doubt retrograded from that status wherein we left it, in which it required Acts of Parliament and no end of municipal denouncements to curb the unseasonable zeal of the people who would play golf when they should not. In 1844, the last date we have dwelt on at all in considering English golfing history, there would certainly have been needed no acts of legislature to moderate Scotland's general zeal for golf. Golf, in fact, had ceased to be a popular game in Scotland. Why? The reason is not far to seek. In the old days we find all the enactments levelled against the playing of golf on the Sabbath; but by this time, and for a long while before, the Puritans had got such a tight hold of the people and of the Sabbath that the bare notion of playing the game on that day would have been a scandal that social opinion could not have tolerated. If a game is to be popular it has to be played on holidays. Sunday was the principal holiday; but the Puritans had made the Sunday something that, if it was a holy day, was certainly not a holiday, and the leisure for golf playing was very much curtailed. So golf had fallen greatly from its high estate in popular favour, and though prophecy is easy enough when you may modify it with an 'if,' it is rather interesting to speculate whether golf would not have died a natural death but for the discovery of gutta-percha as a material for golf balls, in place of the old balls of feather stuffed into leather casings. Probably the date is not on record at which the first gutta-percha ball was made—and found

wanting—(the history of the manner in which the ball was gradually improved until it superseded the feather ball altogether is written in the chapter devoted to clubs and balls); but by the middle of the present century the gutta had taken the place of the feather universally. Of course there were some who fought hard for the old mode, but the gutta-percha had the immense merit of economy—in the degree of being about four hundred per cent. cheaper to buy at the outset, and, moreover, a better lasting ball when bought. This vast recommendation, added to the fact that it was, let us say to avoid controversy, an equally good ball for flight and putting, soon put it at the head of the poll, and the feather ball nowhere—except in museums for antiquities. Had the gutta-percha golf ball not been invented, it is likely enough that golf itself would now be in the catalogue of virtually extinct games, only locally surviving, as stool-ball and knurr and spell.

But, as matter of history, the gutta-percha ball was invented; golf became cheap again, and with its cheapness it became popular. And this essential condition of its popularity arrived just at the time that a great wave of a rising athletic spirit was coming over all Great Britain. At the beginning of our Queen's reign there were scarcely any sports or pastimes that could be called popular. There was no popular interest in any game. That keen interest in athleticism which we see so strongly shown by the multitude of sporting papers, the eagerness with which football records are scanned, and the crowds that attend a cricket match, did not exist at that time. But it arose about the middle of the century, when the golf ball began to be made of gutta-percha, and the two events, the mental and the material, coinciding gave golf (which had, as the great ultimate ground of the popularity it was soon to acquire, the merit of being an extraordinarily interesting pastime) that impetus which has resulted in the legion of golf players that are in the land to-day. The time was ripe, the spirit of the age was ready, the golf ball was cheap and prepared to suffer tops upon the

head, when a fortuitous incident set the ball rolling—this was the visit of a St. Andrews man to Northam village in North Devon. He came as the guest of the late Reverend I. H. Gosset, at that time Vicar of Northam. His experienced eye at once saw the latent capabilities of the Northam Burrows (now better known as the Westward Ho ! golf links) for golf. Mr. Gosset himself, with a keen love of games and having sons of the right age for game playing and game learning, set himself to work in union with some of the resident gentry, and in 1864 the North Devon and West of England Golf Club was formed. Later the 'West of England' part of the title was dropped, and when it was taken under the august patronage of the Prince of Wales the prefix of 'Royal' was adopted. In its inception, however, it was a very small affair, with no club-house, only a room in a farmhouse where members might leave their coats, &c., when they went out playing.

Eighteen holes were laid out on the pattern of St. Andrews. Blackheath had before this increased her five holes to seven, cutting her coat according to her cloth. Eighteen seems now so inevitable a number for the holes of a full-length course that one has come to regard it almost as part of a law of nature that this should be their sum, but even the St. Andrews eighteen were a fairly modern arrangement. History tells us of a time when they were but six, the players going out the present first six holes, then playing the same number back, and so making a course of twelve. The original course at Prestwick was of twelve holes, and this seems to have been the standard number until St. Andrews, in lengthening her course, found the nature of the ground peculiarly adapted for nine holes out and the same number home. And this number, accidentally lighted on, has proved of just the right length to give a man pleasant occupation between his breakfast and his luncheon, and again between his luncheon and his tea-time, with sufficient and not too severe fatigue. Convenience, therefore, and the august

example of St. Andrews have combined to stereotype eighteen as the right number of holes for a full-length course, it is at this number that all aim, and this was the number adopted at Westward Ho! where the expanse of links was practically unlimited.

With the establishment of the club at Westward Ho! a new era dawned for golf in England, and, it is scarcely too much to say, for Scotland too. It has been said, in regard to quite a different matter, that your own opinion grows immensely in its value for yourself as soon as you have persuaded another to share it with you; and it may be that somewhat on this principle, even though it was only our 'auld enimie of England' that was persuaded to be of the opinion that the Scottish national game was a good one, even this victory that the charms of the game won, increased its value in Scottish eyes. This may have been part of the cause, or maybe it is only that gutta-percha and the spirit of athleticism were flying in the air together; in any case the fact is sure, that about the time that England embraced golf with enthusiasm, Scotland began to glow too with a warmer zeal than she had ever shown since John Knox had driven golf clean off the links on Sundays, so that Acts of Parliament for its suppression were superseded by the stronger force of popular opinion.

This golf at Westward Ho! came as a kind of revelation to all Englishmen that had the eyes to behold it. It is a mistake to suppose that, apart from Blackheath and Molesley Hurst, Westward Ho! was the first place south of the Tweed to hear the golfer's 'Fore!' and other less parliamentary technical expressions. The Calcutta club is the oldest south of the Tweed, a queer place for the Scotsmen to have pitched on as an arena for their own game. Then Pau, in the Basses-Pyrénées, claims next place, owing its golf to Scotsmen going abroad in search of a less shrewdly nipping winter air than that of the east Neuk of Fife. And in England itself there was the old Manchester Golf Club, of older institution than the

North Devon. But all these were of the nature of inland greens. That England, no less than Scotland, was begirt by a kindly Providence with a chain of real sandy links—this was a grand fact yet to be revealed, and the revelation began with these links at Westward Ho!

But as yet the number of golfers that had eyes to behold the revelation was very limited. There was the club at Blackheath, and the few members of the Old Manchester club: these embraced, perhaps, all the people resident in England who took a living interest in golf. To other Scotsmen golf may have been a sacred memory; it could scarcely be a present interest. But what the few golfers in England lacked of numbers they made up in enthusiasm. As soon as Blackheath heard that there were seaside links at Westward Ho! its members flocked down there, and the western club in its early days owed a heavy debt to Blackheath's support. The late Mr. George Glennie was the finest golfer in those days in the Blackheath Club, and not far from being the finest amateur player in the world. The Westward Ho! people were much indebted to him, both for precept and example. Tom Morris came down from St. Andrews to lay out the Westward Ho! green. Mr. Glennie's association with St. Andrews was close (subsequently he became Captain of the Royal and Ancient Club, and the donor to the club of a medal which bears his name), so Westward Ho! and the North Devon club were peculiarly fortunate in drawing their golfing inspiration direct from the pure fountain-head. It is perhaps due to these circumstances that England has always, since coming into her golfing heritage, turned her eyes so straight to St. Andrews for her golfing teaching.

It has been said that to Scotsmen resident in England at that time, unless they happened to be within access of Blackheath in Manchester, golf remained more of a memory than an interest; but no sooner had the links of Westward Ho! contrived to make their merits known, largely by the

advertisement given them by the grateful golfers of Blackheath, than the dim memory was at once revived into keen interest, as old golfers realised the possibility of once again taking up the weapons so long laid aside, and playing a game of golf in the land of their exile. Curiously, it does not appear to have occurred to Scotsmen that the coast of England might possess potential golf links; but the accidental visit of the St. Andrews man to the late Vicar of Northam suggested the course at Westward Ho!—as the watering-place that rose on the merits of the golf was subsequently called—and it seems to have been the course at Westward Ho! that suggested to the many golfers and Scotsmen resident in Liverpool that they too might as well scan the shores of the Mersey's estuary in case there might there be ground that would lend itself to the golfer's purposes. No doubt the ground was there, and the Scotsmen were there, long before, but it needed the example of Westward Ho! as it appears, to bring them together.

In this manner grew the Royal Liverpool Club at Hoylake that is to-day so leading a body in English golf, and golf was now—that is to say, about 1870—well in the air. The London Scottish Club was formed out of the fine Scottish nucleus afforded by the volunteer corps of the same title, and played, as it still plays, on Wimbledon Common. Now, too, there is the Royal Wimbledon Club, but that is another, and a newer, story.

Then for some years golf, as an affair of any general interest in England, remained suspended—arrested. Scotsmen, and Englishmen who had been in Scotland, played at golf, taking long journeys for the purpose—to Westward Ho! to Bembridge in the Isle of Wight, for this was one of the earlier greens, and their friends stayed at home and laughed at them with cheap wit. Golf was described as 'an old man's game,' as 'Scotch croquet;' people thought of golf either very little or not at all. There were professional players at each of the principal English greens—

Johnnie Allan at Westward Ho! Tom Dunn at Wimbledon, and Jack Morris at Hoylake—and so restricted was the golfing talent and the golfing area in England at that time that though it used to be the custom, after the meetings of the Royal North Devon Club, to give prizes for professionals on the last day of the week, the competitors for these prizes always resolved themselves into these three, Allan, Dunn, and Morris, and, so naming them, I fancy they are named in the order in which they generally finished in the prize playing. It is almost impossible for those who have grown up in the midst of golf-playing England, such as the country is to-day, to realise what a strange and rare animal a golfer found himself at that time. If you announced yourself a golfer, people stared at you. What did it mean? Oh, yes! that Scotch game—like hockey, was it not, or like polo? Did you play it on horseback? Travelling from Westward Ho! to Wimbledon and Hoylake, or *vice versâ*, with your golf clubs, you were eyed most curiously. In general, people had never seen the weapons before, and asked you, with an apology for their inquisitiveness, what their use could be. Many a practical joke was played by the waggishly minded golfer on their ignorance, and they went home with wonderful tales to tell their wives and children. Or, if people did know a little of the game, then their regards were no longer curious, but pitiful, as who would say, 'See the poor looney—is he not a sad sight?' It grew common to regard golf as a harmless form of imbecility, holding towards it much the same attitude that the general mind has towards a grown man with a butterfly-net and a taste for entomology. Among golfers themselves there was a phrase current at the time which is significant and sounds curiously to-day; they spoke a good deal about 'the freemasonry existing among golfers,' meaning thereby that if you happened to be a devotee of this strange and new cult, and saw another golfer awaiting his train at a station and advertising himself

as a co-religionist by having some clubs with him, you might, and naturally would, at once approach him with the words: 'I see you are a golfer, sir,' and forthwith you would be as blood brothers. Indeed it was quite rare to hear of a man who was a golfer and whom you did not personally know. Golfers were so few, and so constantly meeting, because links were so few, that, speaking in a rough and ready way, each knew all the rest. How very different it is to-day! There is no man with any self-respect at all who would dare to confess himself nothing at all of a golfer. One might as well say that one did not care for reading Shakespeare. And as for going up to a stranger at a railway station on the strength of his having golf clubs with him, one would have to accost nearly every male in Liverpool Street station on a Bank Holiday, and a good many female passengers too. It would mean trouble—certainly it would mean a few rebuffs, for every one of them in these days would not have so much opinion of the 'freemasonry of golf' as we used to hold in the bad old days when golfers were so few. Another difference is that in the old days when you wished to learn what a stranger's 'form' at golf might be, you put the question in the shape of: 'How do you play with So-and-so?' naming some golfer who was sure to be a common acquaintance. Nowadays you ask briefly, 'What is your handicap?' In that golden age there were no handicaps, or the handicap, at all events, had not reached its present pitch of importance. The match was then the thing; men thought less about the competitions. It is not impossible that they enjoyed the game rather more in consequence—but this is to raise a question of taste, rather than of history.

In the early days of English golf there was a great deal of intercourse between Westward Ho! and Hoylake. Both clubs were greatly strengthened by membership of visitors who played habitually at Wimbledon and Blackheath, but perhaps it was rather the matches that were played between Hoylake men and Westward Ho! men that gave an extended

interest to golf than any others. A deal, I think, was due to Mr. John Dunn and to Captain Molesworth. The former, in partnership with Jack Morris, used to play the latter with Johnny Allan as his partner, sometimes at Westward Ho! sometimes at Hoylake. Captain Molesworth was very enterprising. When his sons grew up—of whom, unhappily, only one, Mr. Arthur Molesworth, still survives—he extended his field of operations, and a give-and-take between English and Scottish golfers was established, to which English golf owed much. Mr. Arthur Molesworth was backed to play young Tom Morris, with allowance of a third, at St. Andrews. Unfortunately snow spoiled the match, which the brilliant young professional won easily. Later Captain Molesworth and his three sons played Mr., now Sir William, Houldsworth and three picked amateurs of Scotland. Scotsmen fell into the way of visiting the West Country green—such men as the late Sir Robert Hay, the late General Sir Hope Grant, and many members of the Houldsworth family regularly attended the meetings. The club at Bembridge, in the Isle of Wight, became popular, owing much of its success to the energy of the late Captain J. Eaton, R.N. Inland greens were laid out, and clubs formed, at Crookham and at Kingsdown. Meanwhile the Hoylake green was the nursery of a very great amateur golfer, Mr. John Ball. For a long time, though his success on his own green was very remarkable, he could do nothing worthy of his local fame when he went further afield. He had an interesting match with Douglas Rolland, then playing as an amateur, of which thirty-six holes were played at the latter's home green of Elie, and thirty-six at Hoylake, where Mr. Ball was resident. Rolland won rather easily, Mr. Ball scarcely doing himself justice. Two brothers of the late Johnny Allan, Matthew and Jamie, came to work with him at Westward Ho! and the latter especially soon developed into a wonderfully good player. He was backed to play matches on four greens with Bob Kirk, then reputed the strongest player that St. Andrews

could produce, and this long match, over St. Andrews, Prestwick, Hoylake, and Westward Ho! the young English professional (English by adoption, though Prestwick was his native place) won very easily. But in a return match, over the same four greens, with Jamie Anderson as Scotland's representative, the latter avenged the honour of the northern country and won with tolerable ease.

All these matches have an historical interest, not so much on their own account, as because they were the means of the intercourse between Scottish and English golf, from which the latter gathered so much advantage—learned much about the game, and extended the interest in it to many who had been indifferent or lukewarm before.

But in spite of all efforts the game was in no sense popular in England, and it was even at the time that these matches were being played that the man at the railway station would look askance at one's golf clubs or regard the golfer with a pity that was nearer akin to scorn than love. It was difficult for cricket-playing England to look with anything but contempt on a game at which we struck a motionless ball, and at which, when that ball had been struck, one walked after it, with deliberation. If there had been any violent running required, the average Englishman would have understood and respected the game much sooner. Boyhood has been universally regarded as the game-playing age, but golf is not a particularly good game for boys, for the simple reason that running is the natural pace of boyhood, and that in golf there is no running. Also, it is rather more expensive to the individual pocket than games where expenses are defrayed by a subscription that is put down in the bill. Therefore the youth of England was not educated up to golf, and such golf as it played was in the nature of a holiday task, if it so happened that the holiday home was near one or other of the rare golf greens. But no doubt the fact that Mr. R. A. H. Mitchell, the preceptor of cricket, and a few other things, at Eton College, took to golf while it was

yet but little known in England, helped to make boys, who were soon to be men, realise that there was such a game, and that it possibly might be not altogether despicable if such a grand cricketer condescended to play it. At the universities a slight interest in the game sprang into being. In 1880 men were playing golf in the non-cricketing terms on Cowley Marsh, at Oxford, and in the same year the first Inter-University match was played at Wimbledon. To the Reverend P. Henderson, of Wadham College, golf at Oxford, and indirectly English golf generally, is much indebted for the interest he took in the club there. Subsequently the club ground was shifted to Mr. Morrell's park on Headington Hill, and finally to its present quarters, which seem likely to be permanent, at Hinksey. Cambridge golf was largely the creation of Mr. W. T. Linskill, who was indefatigable in his labours for it for many years. More fortunate than the Oxford Club, it has always had its green undisturbed on Coldham Common. Cambridge, too, has the further advantage of being within easy reach of some first-class golf links on the east coast. In 1878 to 1882, however, when the writer was at Oxford, very few men bothered their heads about golf, and the general attitude of the university towards the game may be shown by quoting an anecdote that has a certain personal bearing, but is perhaps to be pardoned because it illustrates the subject so well. 'Did you know So-and-so when he was at Oxford?' a certain golfer, the reformed cricketer class was asked in 1897. 'Oh yes!' was the answer, 'I was up there with him in 1880, and I remember that he was even then said to be good at a game that nobody had ever heard of.' That shows what Oxford thought of golf in 1880—not a great deal, but it was about as much as the rest of England thought of it. The 'boom' in English golf began not very much less than ten years later. In the meantime it did not 'boom;' but it crept. Gradually the number of golf links in England increased, gradually more Englishmen took to playing golf, more and more they

invaded the high places of Scottish golf in their autumn holiday; and meantime the tide was mounting up in Scotland too. Very likely Scotland began to think a little more of her national game, even than of old, as soon as she saw it bringing a few English 'bawbees' across the Border; it could not have demonstrated its fascinations in a manner more convincing than that. In other ways, too, it became apparent to Scottish eyes that there was money in golf; more money, since England began to take an interest in it. It has already been noticed that Johnny Allan was at Westward Ho! Tom Dunn at Wimbledon, Jack Morris at Hoylake. At every new green, as one by one they came into being, there was a demand for a professional player who could teach the local people how the game should be played, and could mend and make clubs for them withal. There set in, then, a steady flow south of professional golfing talent to Bembridge, later to Alnmouth, to Great Yarmouth, to all the golf greens of England as they were laid out. For as yet—and it now seems difficult to realise how short a while ago that dark age was in which England knew little or nothing beyond what she imported from Scotland of good golf—the notion that the southern land could produce any capable professional players and capable instructors was quite undreamed of in her philosophy. The 'boom,' the big 'boom,' came with such alarming suddenness. In 1885 golf was the eccentricity affected by a few; by 1890 it had become a general fashion. The exact combination of causes that produced the result would be hard to determine. Golf is no better a game now than then. The opportunities for appreciating its merits were not so numerous, but they existed, yet still the general opinion of England held it in scorn. It was the 'old man's game'—there was no running in it: after all, that is perhaps the prime reason that it did not commend itself. Add to that the fact that it is probably the dullest game in the world for a spectator who has no personal knowledge of its excellences, and perhaps we need

not go further back than that to explain the indifferent attitude so long maintained towards it. Once, however, let the spectator become in the feeblest degree a player, and the fascination of the game never leaves a properly constituted man. One or two causes there were that helped to give the 'boom' its start, and among these, I think, we may reckon the accident that Mr. Arthur Balfour was an enthusiastic golfer. It may seem a singular thing that the example of a single man should have had so great an effect, and had the game been less good, had the time been less ripe, and had Mr. Balfour's place in the national eye been a less unique one, probably it would have failed of that effect. But Mr. Balfour had just become Irish Secretary at a moment when the Irish question was the biggest problem of British politics. He had taken the office when it had lately been made vacant in a very tragic manner, and he filled it after a fashion that won the warmest admiration of friend and foe alike. And it was no doubt the singular coincidence of all these circumstances that made his example so infectious. In 1890, when the first edition of the Badminton volume on golf was published, the publishers were in some doubt whether the game was of sufficient importance to justify its being accorded a full volume to itself in that series. There was even a talk of incorporating curling and skating with it. But even while that question was being resolved the game was growing in favour, so that it was decided that it should be given the dignity of single-volume treatment, with the result that not only was so much copy forthcoming that it was hard to compress it all within the volume's limits, but the book itself proved, if the present writer may be pardoned in saying so, a popular success, and its sixth edition is now in the hands of the public.

Once the impetus was given, the game rushed into favour 'by leaps and bounds'—in a geometrical progression—it is impossible any longer to chronicle the several steps. If before it had seemed the part of a simple or an eccentric

person to avow himself a golfer, it now became no less the fashion to affect an intimate acquaintance with the game. In a very short while it was the exception to find a person who was not a golfer, and any general ignorance of the principles and purpose of the game was unheard of. Golf 'shop' was rampant, is rampant still, and will remain rampant so long as golf continues to hold anything like its present position in popular favour; and its popularity was the more assured as soon as the ladies discovered that they too might claim a share in the good gift that Scotland had sent down to England. In that Badminton volume just referred to, there is an excellent chapter on the game by Lord Wellwood, which indicates very well the degraded position, golficè speaking, of women at the time of his writing. They are given, he says, a little corner of the links—a sort of 'Jews' quarter'—in which to lay out their short holes, and enjoy themselves after their own manner, without interfering with the rational enjoyment of the men. This was the condition of affairs at St. Andrews at the time of Lord Wellwood's writing, and the short holes—very up-and-downy, very trying to the putter used to the level velvet of the greens of the long links—remain as they were, but does woman remain as she was at that date? Certainly not. She now puts down her name for ballot for order of starting to play over the long links in company with the best of menkind, even in those congested months of August and September in which woman of the old type would not have dared to show the hem of her petticoat in the stream of players. Now she drives off fearlessly under the gaze of the watching clubhouse, and the short holes down by the burn are noticed by her chiefly with contempt.

There is every reason at St. Andrews that ladies should play on the long course—that specially designed for them is too short for the needs of the modern feminine golfer. But elsewhere there are such excellent ladies' links, suited to their moderate length of driving, that they had better perhaps restrict

their energies to them than, too greatly daring, invade the longer links of the men, where they cannot hope to carry the bunkers. Modern ladies, however, are nothing if not ambitious—that, indeed, is the great secret of their success. The energy with which they have taken to the game has made a change in the summer holidays for the golfer's wife. Before ladies played golf eagerly, there were no opponents of the game more bitter. The 'golf-widow' was a subject for every commiseration, and for the humorous pencil of Mr. Harry Furniss. But now, if she wear weeds at all, it is by her own choice—a choice that few care to make. The better part prefer a short skirt, a shirt and a sailor hat, and play golf with an earnestness that even the husbands can scarcely rival. The golfer of fifty or even fifteen years ago would be horrified at the innovation. Ladies on the links at all, even in the passive *rôle* of spectators, were a vexation to his rather morbidly sensitive soul. Nor was he altogether wrong in this point of view towards them, for in the last fifteen years it is not only the golfing man, but also the golfing woman that has changed. If there could be said to be golfing ladies in the land at all fifteen years ago, they were very few, and 'ladies on the links,' in the mouth of the old golfer, meant a bevy of delightful but rather talkative females, who knew little about the game and cared less, who spoke on the stroke and giggled in answer to any remonstrance. In a word, they did not understand the game, or appreciate that if it is to be played well enough to give any pleasure, it must be played with attention and concentration. The modern golfing lady understands all this perfectly. Very often she can play the game as well as half the men she has the chance of watching, and it has become hard for man to deny her equal rights with him on the links when she can challenge him and defeat him at the game. This is no over-statement. Mr. Harold Hilton is open champion at the moment of writing this line; his handicap at Hoylake is *plus* ten. Mr. Hilton, as I judge, would give the best lady players about two-thirds

—certainly, I think, he could not give them a stroke a hole. At Hoylake, therefore, we may take it that the best lady players would receive a handicap of something like six strokes. And it is difficult to say to a person whose handicap is six that he, or even she, is not fit company for you on the links, for the answer may conceivably take the form of *argumentum ad hominem*, e.g. 'Well, let's have a match, and see;' and if the argument goes against you, the case becomes awkward. But however well woman might play golf, the point of view of the old golfer would still remain fully justified if she had not acquired a full knowledge and understanding of the game, or if she persisted in approaching it in any unseemly spirit of levity. But, far from this, she brings to bear upon it an even more than masculine solemnity. Her earnestness is grim and terrible; there is no modern player of the male sex who would fulfil more perfectly all the requirements of the oldtime golfer. Woman, in fact, has justified her claim to equality with man on the links, and the sooner he can be brought to understand it the better for the comfort of both sexes; only, the shorter links are long enough for most women, as they are, in fact, for many men, and it is no kindness either to them or to other players to let them loose on the longer links before their strength of driving has outgrown the shorter.

With this new feminine factor of its popularity to help it, the causes of the 'boom' in golf need no further seeking. The woman that had before fought against the golf resort as the home of the summer holidays now welcomed its suggestion most warmly, and of this Scotland soon felt the influence. Not only those great golfing centres of St. Andrews and North Berwick suffered under an annual invasion of the Sassenach, but such less famous places as Elie, Leven, Montrose, Nairn, even Dornoch, and so on, without end, found their lodging-houses and hotels invaded by 'our auld enimie of England,' who had at least this merit, that he brought his cheque-book with him. And naturally this

invasion reacted on Scotland, after the Sassenachs had left, in making golf seem a more important thing even than before in native eyes, and inspiring the local youth to eager emulation.

Concurrent causes helped to swell the rising tide. In part it was cause, in part effect, of the golfing boom that in 1885 the Royal Liverpool Club, at Hoylake, virtually instituted the amateur championship tournament, by a competition open to all amateurs played over their green. In the quality of the entry list, and in every respect except its formal recognition, this was indeed to be regarded as the first amateur championship meeting, and its winner was Mr. A. F. Macfie. In the following year, a competition on almost identical lines, under the auspices of all the leading clubs in the kingdom, was held at St. Andrews, and thus the annual tournament for the amateur championship of golf had its being; and there is no doubt that its institution was a great factor, as in part it was the result, of the flowing tide of the game's popularity. Heretofore there had been but one championship, that open to all the world. This, the open championship, had been started as far back as the year 1860, under the auspices of the three great Scottish clubs, the Royal and Ancient of St. Andrews, the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers—who then had their playground on the links of Musselburgh—and the Prestwick Club on the West Coast. These three subscribed for a belt, which should be the champion trophy of the game, and was offered for competition on the understanding that it should become the property of any who could win it thrice in succession. This great feat was performed by the late 'young Tommy' Morris, who won it for the third consecutive time in 1870. The following year, for lack of a trophy, there was no competition, but the next year again the same three clubs subscribed for the present championship cup, which, warned by previous experience, they offered under strictly challenge conditions, so that it remains in the winner's keeping but for his year of championship, though

he win it never so often. This cup the brilliant and lamented young player, Tommy Morris, won yet again, making his fourth consecutive win—a feat that has never been equalled. It can never be too greatly regretted, apart from all other reasons of regret, that premature death cut him down in his prime, because it would have been of the keenest interest to see how his performance would have compared with that of the younger school of players that has arisen since. That he was *facile princeps* of his contemporaries seems to have been placed beyond doubt by his unequalled series of victories in competitions, though in many a private match he was hardly pressed and sometimes defeated by the late Davie Strath, the two constantly playing each other on the St. Andrews green, of which both were natives. That the subscribing clubs were wise in their generation in making the new championship cup a strictly challenge trophy is amply proved by three successive wins that have been put on record since by Bob Fergusson and by the late Jamie Anderson respectively.

For many years it seems never to have entered into the calculations of golfing seers that this open championship of the Scottish game should be won by any other than by a Scottish professional. Few amateurs even presumed to take part in it, and of these but a small percentage were Englishmen. The number of the amateurs thus presuming, however, showed a steady but gradual increase, until the event of the championship meeting held at Prestwick in 1890 completely changed the aspect of the affair. At the close of that competition the writer well remembers that Mr. Laidlaw Purves came to him and said, with a due sense of the solemnity of the occasion: 'This is a great day for golf.' It was a great day, an epoch-making day, in a double sense, for on that day the open championship was won by Mr. John Ball junior, an amateur and an Englishman.

The importance of this victory on the future of the game was not inconsiderable, for it opened the eyes of the golfing

world to the possibility of an amateur and an Englishman gaining the highest glory that can be won at the game, and the possibility had scarcely been entertained before. It at once put the pretensions of amateur golf on a higher level than they had yet reached, and made the recurrence of such an event the more probable. The next date in the history of the open championship that is marked by any considerable significance is 1894, for in this year the championship was won by J. H. Taylor, a young professional who had learned his golf on the links of Westward Ho! In a sense his victory was of more significance than that of Mr. Ball, for the very reason that Taylor was an Englishman and at the same time a professional. In our review of earlier years, we have seen that it was the custom of the English clubs, as one by one they came into being, to bring down from Scotland a professional to teach them how the game should be played, to look after their greens, and to do their club-making. But with the victory of Taylor in the great event it was made amply apparent that they need no longer be at the pains to import their professional talent from the North. Taylor was but one of an army of rising young players who were perfecting themselves in the golfing schools of the South, and not only did his win serve to show the amateur members of the clubs that there was golfing talent of the highest order in the South, but also to prove to this army of young English professionals and caddies that it was possible for one out of their own ranks to take premier place of the golfers of the year. It at once made the profession of golf appear more important and worthy in English eyes. In the following year this sign of the times was brought into stronger evidence by a second successive victory on Taylor's part, won at the great centre of golf in Scotland and in the world, on the classic links of St. Andrews.

A change had by this time taken place in the conditions under which the championship was played. We have already noted that Taylor's first victory was gained at Sandwich,

whereas the original sequence of greens on which the competition was held was St. Andrews, Prestwick, and Musselburgh. But even before this there had been a relaxation of this rule of sequence. The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers had found the links of Musselburgh growing too crowded for them, and had moved further down the Forth to a new green at Muirfield. When the turn came for the championship to be decided under their honourable auspices, they decreed, by right of their original participation in instituting it, that it should be played on their new Muirfield green. There was natural opposition in certain quarters to the change, but in the end the Honourable Company had their way. Further, a change was made, by agreement of the three clubs, by which the competition was decided by the result of two days' play, extending over four rounds, instead of a single day's play of two rounds as heretofore. And, finally, this competition at Muirfield was made yet more worthy of note by the victory of Mr. H. H. Hilton, following in the steps of his fellow clubman, Mr. Ball. The sequence of greens on which this open championship is played has since undergone a further re-arrangement, by virtue of which Sandwich and Hoylake are included, and the first competition of this nature held on the latter green was noted for the second victory of Mr. Hilton, who has thus won for himself the unique honour of being the only amateur that has twice won the open championship of the game.

This inclusion of two English greens among those on which the championship is played—and they are the established battlefields of the amateur tournament, no less—are a sign of the generous recognition on Scotland's part of the right of Englishmen to take their stand on equal terms with her in matters pertaining to her national game. And while this is creditable to Scotland's breadth of view, it is surely no less creditable to England that, in spite of all the success that has attended her forces under golfing arms, she is ever willing and anxious to look to St. Andrews as the source of golfing

legislation and authority. After much discussion a committee has lately been appointed, consisting entirely of members of the Royal and Ancient Club, but representative, nevertheless, of golfing opinion all the world over, that has the special office of interpreting vexed questions of the rules and pronouncing on them a verdict that has the power of law until it is confirmed or negatived by the vote of a general meeting of the Royal and Ancient Club, and the authority of this committee the general golfing opinion, both of England and Scotland, seems disposed to recognise without demur and even with gratitude.

But the rise into what may almost be regarded as premier position among the English clubs of the St. George's Club at Sandwich is too large a feature in the golfing history of our own times to be passed over without some special notice. In the older days the Royal North Devon Club and the Royal Liverpool were the leaders, the former owing much of its success to the exertions of the Reverend I. H. Gosset, Captain Molesworth, R.N., and, if the writer may be pardoned the mention of a relative, Lieut.-Colonel Hutchinson, who was also one of the three founders of the club at Pau. With the Royal Liverpool Club the name of Mr. Thomas Owen Potter, for so long its honorary secretary, is perhaps most gratefully associated. At the first the Westward Ho! Club, by right of seniority, perhaps held first place in common esteem, but later the Royal Liverpool Club, by virtue of its more central geographical position in Great Britain, and also in part by the successful start it gave to the amateur championship tournament, stepped into first place, and was more generally considered as representative of English golf. But very much more recently—so recently, indeed, that it was not represented at all at the time of the inauguration of the amateur championship—the young club, by name the St. George's, was formed to play golf over the links of Sandwich. As to who precisely was the first to lay golf club to the links of Sandwich there is some conflict

of evidence. There is at Brancaster now a Mr. Luck, in the coastguard service, who, being stationed at the coastguard buildings near the 'Maiden' tee at Sandwich, and having learned something of golf in the North, went out, cut holes in the turf, and, sinking gallipots to preserve their shape, made himself a golf course and played golf. This was many years before the present club was formed, and Mr. Luck has some claim to be the first golfer that ever drove a ball on the Sandwich links. On the other hand, there is a legend of a certain person, by profession a schoolmaster, who went out from the other end, the Sandwich town side, of the links and there drove about balls for his own edification; and it is probable that the date of this legendary playing was earlier than that of Mr. Luck. But, however these things may be, it is certain that neither of these pioneers had the opportunity, though they might have had all the genius, to give due importance, in the public eye, to their discoveries. The opportunity of giving this fair gift of the Sandwich links to the golfing world became the portion, much later, of Mr. Laidlaw Purves, and, with him, of the late Mr. Henry Lamb and the late Mr. W. R. Anderson. It was to this trio (of whom only one, alas! survives), perhaps more than to any others, that Sandwich and the St. George's Club owe their fame and initial success, though it would be wrong to pass without mention the special services of Mr. W. Rutherford, honorary secretary now, and for many years, of the club. The great merits and possibilities of the newly discovered green were quickly recognised, and though it was of course several years before the ground worked down into the most perfect golfing material, it soon justified the best hopes of the club's founders, and became one of the foremost and most popular of English golf clubs. Besides its special excellences as a golf green, it had the merit of being within easy access of London, a merit that it shared with no other green of anything at all approaching the same excellence. And not only was it within easy access, but it had the further

advantage to commend it that its centre of management was in London. It was in fact virtually a London club, having its green at the seaside. The peculiar merit of this is obvious. Hitherto Londoners who wanted to play golf had to play it on the inland greens in the neighbourhood of the Metropolis, or else to go down to Bembridge, to Westward Ho! to Hoylake—wherever you please—excellent links, all of them, but all of them under a local management, so that the visiting golfer—however old a member of the club he might be, or however hearty the welcome that the local members might accord him—inevitably felt himself nevertheless still a visitor. At Sandwich he was at home. In London he had been in the centre of the machinery that kept the club going, and he knew just what he was going to find, and all that had been going on—for the general meetings were held in London—even before he went thither.

This, I think, we may take it, in addition to the sterling qualities of its very fine green, was the reason that the St. George's Club so soon obtained a leading position among English clubs, and was included, along with the Royal Liverpool Club, among those on whose greens the great championships of the game were to be played. It was with no disposition to underrate the claims of the Westward Ho! green as a worthy arena of the championship that the authorities did not include it also, but merely by reason of its geographical remoteness from the golfing centres of England and Scotland.

The history of the amateur championship is briefer and marked by less notable incident than that of the open championship. Virtually started by the Royal Liverpool Club in 1885, and formally recognised by delegates from all the leading clubs in the following year, its conditions—as determined by the delegates—have remained unchanged until the present date, with the single exception that three years ago it was decreed that the final heat should be played off on the day following that on which the semi-final heats

were played, and should consist of thirty-six holes, instead of the eighteen that had sufficed in the previous tournaments. The hero of the tournament thus far has without question been Mr. John Ball, who has won it no less than four times. In the year 1890 he was the holder of both open and amateur championships. It is singularly noteworthy that Mr. Hilton, twice winner of the open event, has never yet held the championship of the amateurs.

The history of golf in Ireland has been but brief, but Ireland has felt her full share, nevertheless, of the enthusiasm with which golf has been received into the heart of the greater island. The oldest established of the first-class Irish clubs is the Royal Portrush Club, though it appears that golf in Ireland was first played on the Kinnegar, hard by Belfast. To-day Ireland has many golf clubs and a capable army of native players, though none of them has yet been of sufficient prowess to win that Irish championship that is liberally thrown open to all amateur golfers. Besides this, she has her own native championship, restricted to those who are truly Irish golfers, and the competition for this is keen and close, but has brought into evidence no one player whose force is conspicuously greater than that of several others.

Of golf in Wales it is not necessary to make special mention, except to observe that the sea coast of the Principality is begirt with many fine links, all which have their enthusiastic resident players.

Golf has become a popular game also in the Isle of Man, and there is scarcely any British possession or dependency that is without its golf club or many golf clubs. We have already noted the singular fact that the golf club of Calcutta is the oldest established, Blackheath excepted, of any south of the Tweed. To-day the name of golf clubs in India is legion. A club of respectable age and of excellent links is that of Jersey, and in Guernsey is a later laid-out course that vies with it in excellence. Just across the Channel, at Dinard, is a fine seaside course. Pau, though inland, gives good golf, and it

has a keen rival in the younger club at Biarritz. In Australia, at Hong Kong, at Cairo, in South Africa, in South America, in every quarter of the globe where the Anglo-Saxon has set his adventurous and impertinent foot, he has established the national game of Scotland. But the most striking and among the most modern of golfing phenomena has been the enthusiasm with which the game has been received in the United States. Some seven or eight years ago it was the good fortune of the writer to be at Long Island in the States, and there, on the property of the most hospitable Meadowbrook Club, at Hempstead, he played a round of golf on an impromptu links, and subsequently, the members having kindly said that it seemed 'a very good game for Sunday,' he sent a parcel of clubs; but to the best of his belief they were never used. The seed fell on stony ground. Possibly the exhibition of the game given by the writer did not inspire the spectators with any great opinion of it. At all events, it was several years before the Americans bethought themselves at all seriously of the game. But once they recognised its merits they fell victims to its fascination with an *abandon* to which the history of golf in this country furnishes no parallel. Within the last few years links have been laid out in all directions, clubs have been formed, club houses have been built at great expense and on a scale that seems truly continental as compared with the humble little insular houses of this country, a demand has sprung up in America, not only for British golfing materials, but also for British professional players to teach the game and to do club-making on the spot. America has its championships, and though the native-born talent has never yet succeeded in vanquishing the skill of imported players, there is evidence, in the hard fights that the foreign talent has suffered to gain the victory, that before long the athleticism and adaptability of the American will assert itself at the expense of the best that can be brought over from this side of the water.

The history of American golf has been so brief that it can

scarcely be said to exist, and indeed its whole history is to be summed up in the single fact of the existence—of the birth—of its golf and in the tremendous pace of its immediate growth. Only a year or two back there was no golf in the States; now golf is such a fashion that it is said to be transforming the conditions of American life in the East, in that, for golf's sake, people are betaking themselves to life in the country in preference to that life in cities that they used to love better than any country delights. If golf has really done this for them, created this salutary change of taste, surely they have better reasons even than any given to us for blessing the revelation that discovered it to them.

It is most ungallant to speak thus late in the chapter of the ladies' championship, but in point of historical fact the ladies' championship came later than any other. We have already seen with what enthusiasm ladies took to golf as soon as it became apparent to them that they need not be restricted to those putting greens, the 'Jews' quarters' of Lord Wellwood, and the effect in swelling the flowing tide of the game's popularity that their newly won favour exercised. The new, feminine, impetus came almost wholly from English greens. The sentiment of Scottish golf was too conservative, the tradition that it was a man's game, and that woman had no place on the links, was too ingrained in the mind of Scottish man and woman to allow the former to encourage or the latter to entertain any hope that she might one day meet man on something like terms of equality on his long links. But in England golf was newer, its conditions had not reached the crystallised stage, and in consequence woman was both readier to dare and found less opposition to her daring. The first ladies' championship tournament, on lines similar to those of the amateur championship of men, was held at Lytham St. Anne's, in 1893. In the following year it was held at Littlestone, and the year after that at Portrush, in Ireland. But the change of *venue* made not the slightest difference in the result. On each occasion equally the

winner was Lady Margaret Scott, a young lady who had learned her excellent, strong, and finished game on the private green of Stowell Park, in Gloucestershire. There is not the slightest doubt—so little that one writes the phrase of invidious comparison without a fear of hurting the feelings even of those who were Lady Margaret Scott's victims—that this lady was considerably stronger all round than any others who entered for the tournament. After her third successive win Lady Margaret Scott has not taken any part in these competitions.

There were very many, especially of the older school, who were in the habit of saying that golf was not a graceful game for ladies. This brave and general assertion was emphatically contradicted by the style shown by several of those that took part in the ladies' championship. It was realised then that golf could be played both gracefully and ungracefully equally by women as by men, and also that golf contained no conditions that made it essentially unsuited for ladies' playing. They were found able to play all the strokes. Though their driving was not equal in degree with that of men it was no less perfect in kind, and in the shorter and more delicate strokes they were seen at no disadvantage. It was even found to be possible for them to be silent on the stroke. But as yet, it will be noticed, no Scottish green had offered itself as the arena of this feminine championship, and but few Scottish ladies had taken part in it. Scarcely could it be said that it had received its due notice by any of the greatest English clubs until, in 1896, it was decided at Hoylake in favour of Miss Amy Pascoe. The following year saw its first introduction into Scotland. Gullane was now the arena of its decision, and there was a strong entry of Scottish lady players. The Misses Orr had long been known, exceptionally among their fellow country-women, for fine play on the long links, and they justified most fully the reputation they had gained, Miss Edith Orr, the second sister, winning championship honours by defeating her elder

GOLFERS OF THE DUTCH TILE PERIOD.

sister in the final heat. There were very many who then regretted that Lady Margaret Scott was no longer among the candidates for the championship, that the world might have had the spectacle of an international contest between such able lady representatives of Scottish and English golf. In 1898 the competition was held on the links of Great Yarmouth, where Miss Lena Thomson was the victor.

The Americans, brief as has been the golfing history of their country, are no whit behind us, and have their feminine championship too, under similar conditions. They name it, perhaps preferably, 'women's championship,' but that is a mere matter of taste. As a matter of golf, it is noteworthy that there is with them a Miss Beatrix Hoyt, who seems to be a rival to our Lady Margaret Scott in the early years of our ladies' championship, Miss Hoyt having won the Women's Championship of the States for the third successive year in 1898.

In the quartette of old Dutch tiles, of which illustrations are given, we no doubt see incidents of 'golf as she was played' in the land of its birth. Two of the pictures show the players engaged in putting at a stick, which seems to have been the general form of short game in the Low Countries, and which might with advantage be imitated here on some putting greens that we know of. In No. 1 illustration it would seem that a dispute has arisen on some point of the rules, or possibly on a question of the score. Both antagonists look like litigious fellows who would insist on their rights to the full letter of the law. No. 2 shows the back view of a gentleman who appears to be watching the result of a shot that he has just played. In No. 3 both players are posing in an attitude that seems to suggest a consciousness that the eye of the Kodak—or, if that is too much of an anachronism, at least of the golfing artist—is upon them, and the player with his club to the ball is flagrantly neglecting that most cardinal of maxims: 'Keep your e'e on

the ba'.' No. 4 shows an earnest student sedulously practising his putt.

In all these matches it is to be observed that there are no caddies, the players apparently relying on their varied resource with one club only; and in all cases the balls are of very large size—thirties, we should guess—excellent balls with which to lay a stimy.

CHAPTER II

GOLF AS A GAME

By H. H. Hilton

It is almost more than difficult to compare golf as a game with other outdoor athletic pastimes; in fact, it is always difficult to compare one game with another, and conviction on this point is more than confirmed by similar attempts in the past. Like every other game, it has its advantages and its disadvantages, and the great difficulty one has to contend against is taking a more or less prejudiced view of the situation, and a dispassionate opinion is more than a rarity. Some few years back followers of what may be termed the more athletic pastimes were apt to view golf in the light of an old man's game, and this fact was naturally conducive to a feeling of contempt. Time has in the main, however, altered this opinion, and now the feeling of contempt has changed to a feeling of distrust as this 'glorified croquet,' as one well-known 'Varsity athlete termed it, has claimed so many recruits from the cricket field and lawn tennis courts. Golf is essentially a sober game and also an individualistic game. The player is in a manner dependent on no one, and this is where the attraction lies. There is so much to conquer, and it can be conquered in solitude. There is nothing more delightful to a player who really loves the game than to take half-a-dozen balls to a secluded spot and try to overcome the peculiarities of some individual club, for clubs, although they may be made to an exact pattern, often vary in an extraordinary manner. To all

appearances they are similar, but it will often be found that whereas one club has a penchant for 'pulling,' its 'fellow' will persist in propelling the ball to what is termed in cricket the 'off' side. It is called 'slice' in golfing phraseology, but a sliced ball generally means a stroke which has a decided cut or spin upon it; and I have often come across clubs which habitually send the ball on the off side without any suspicion of cut or spin upon it, and the attempt to overcome the idiosyncrasies of one's instruments undoubtedly supplies one of the great charms in the game.

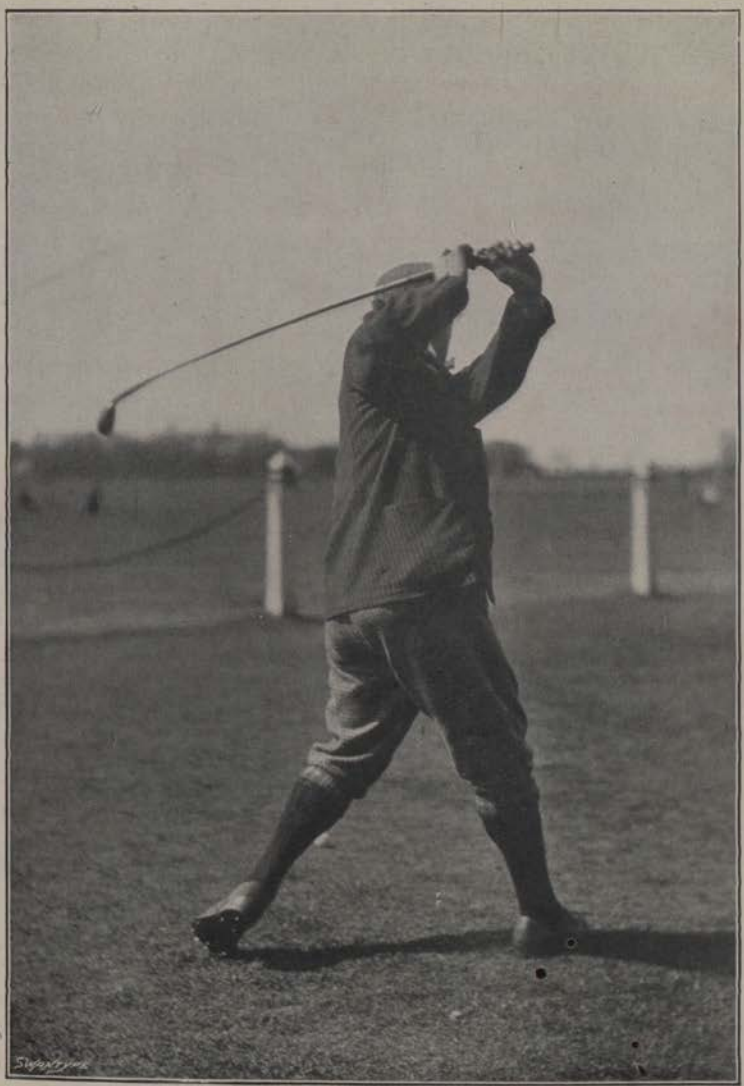
In comparison with the majority of outdoor pastimes it has an advantage in the fact that it can be played at any season of the year, winter or summer. Very little comes amiss to the golfer. Wet weather will ruin a cricket match, but a really enthusiastic golfer pays very little heed to it. With the aid of an umbrella, he is willing to brave the elements; it may be in a sense unpleasant, but there is always a compensating balance. Individualistic it may be as a recreation, but in a manner its individualism is its salvation, as it is possible to enjoy the game in solitude, which can be said of no other rival pastime. That it fails in not calling for that *esprit de corps* which is always advanced as such a feature of cricket and football must be admitted, but the golfer is always happy in the thought that he is not asked to sink his individualism for the sake of his fellow players. It may be a selfish view of the situation, but it makes it none the less attractive.

HINTS TO BEGINNERS

The greatest difficulty I have always found with the beginner 'proper' is the want of flexibility in many of the muscles and joints, particularly in the lower members of his anatomy. After being placed in position—as even this is often necessary, for many at the first attempt place themselves in such a position that it is almost a moral impossibility that they can even by the wildest of contortions possibly strike

the ball—the tiro invariably straightens every muscle and sinew from his hip downwards, and so restricts his freedom of action, which invariably results in the club being well on its upward journey in the forward swing before the club-head reaches the ball. The reason is explained to him, and he is told slightly to bend his knees. He promptly complies with your request, but in such a manner that he can be but likened unto a broken-kneed cab horse—there is still a complete lack of elasticity. He naturally cannot as yet understand that golf is not played with the arms alone. The arms and upper portion of the body are certainly what may be termed the senior partner, but they are next to useless unless backed up by the other parts of the body—the hips, the knees, and the feet—and it is the combination of these with the arms and shoulders which produces that rhythmical motion which is the beauty of a true swing developed from childhood's days. In golf there are certain muscles which even an athlete has probably never employed in any other branch of athletics, or perhaps it would be more correct to say has never previously employed in a similar fashion. Golf is one of the few games which do not require quickness of eye and hand; the eye and the hand must work together as they do in cricket and other pastimes, but it is a union more remarkable for accuracy and steadfastness of purpose than actual celerity, and in this sense it is a difficult game, as once allow the eye to wander and disaster generally follows in its wake. The natural inclination of a beginner is to employ the part of his anatomy which nature has endowed with the greatest comparative physical power. It may be that he is blessed with an abnormally strong forearm; golfingly, he is not blessed, as the swing of a golf club is not from the forearm but from the joints, the wrists, and the shoulders, and to obtain a true golfing swing the muscles and sinews of the right forearm must be slack in order to obtain the necessary freedom of action. Let any beginner, or even experienced player, try to swing a club round his shoulders

while keeping the sinews and muscles of the right arm tight; he will find that the club cannot possibly be taken round the neck, he either must let the hand loose altogether or give up the task, and it is here that the great secret of a true golfing swing comes in—the 'sliding of the club in the right hand.' To any one starting in youth it comes as a second nature, but the natural inclination of the would-be golfer commencing late in life is to grip with the right hand as if his life depended upon it. Look closely at instantaneous photographs of first-class players taken when at the top of the swing, observe closely the position of the club in the right hand; it will be seen that it reposes delicately between the thumb and the first two fingers. It would almost appear that the player had lost command of the club with this particular hand, but it is not so; the muscles are simply relaxed in order to enable the club to be swung well round the neck, he has still full possession of the club, and the power behind the remainder of the hand can be applied at any moment on the downward swing. It is this sliding of the club in the right hand which is the main difficulty with all beginners; they naturally assume that to strike hard it is necessary to grip tightly. This in a sense may be true, but they cannot understand that the pressure is not applied until the club is well on its downward journey, and a tight grip with the right hand not only restricts the freedom of action on the upward swing, but also on the downward swing. Keep the club loose in the right hand, and try to play with loose joints, particularly in the knees and wrists, and never forget to follow well through after the ball. It is not so much the actual follow through with the club-head that keeps the ball straight, it simply signifies that the club has been swung truly, and it is consequently a premeditated action before ever the player has commenced to swing the club; and although it may be somewhat of a tax always to remember this maxim before striking the ball, it will in the end be found well worth the trouble, as eventually it will become a species of second nature.



MR. H. H. HILTON, AT TOP OF SWING.
Showing position of hands.

'SPARING' WITH A PLAY CLUB

This is a stroke which I have been specially requested to deal with in this chapter, but it is a stroke which I cannot conscientiously recommend golfers to attempt to acquire. There are too many possibilities of disastrous results, and to acquire even a comparative degree of success there must be complete command of the club—a qualification which very few players starting late in life really possess. In addition to this, it is a stroke which really should never be called for, if a player can use a cleek or a driving mashie. It is the outcome of acknowledged weakness; and in the writer's case, it was merely a question of necessity being the mother of invention. Never could I play a long shot with an iron club with any continued degree of accuracy, with the result that I had to fall back upon the play club, and so developed what is termed the 'half brassy shot.' It was no question of choice, it was a case of pure necessity. If it is a difficult stroke to play, it is certainly more difficult to explain theoretically. One great essential, however, is to keep the body firm, and trust to the swing of the arms; and in order to do this, a wide stance must be taken standing what is termed open to the ball, which latter should be placed opposite to the position taken by the left foot, swing easily, and never forget to follow through. At all times it is a dangerous stroke, but it is courting disaster to attempt to play it when not in practice. By the accompanying photographs it will be seen that the club is not taken round the neck at all in the upward swing, while the finish is very similar to that of the full drive; the follow-through, however, being not so accentuated, owing chiefly to the wide stance and consequent rigidity of the joints.

PUTTING

I quite agree with the author of this volume when he once remarked 'Putting is an inspiration.' That dread enemy, 'anno domini,' will stiffen muscles and shorten drives, will

handicap you in playing forcing strokes from bad or indifferent lies; but except for a certain dulness of vision, which may or may not be a disadvantage, as it saves one from seeing obstructions which are more often than not imaginary. Have we not all seen a tried and experienced player study a short and apparently easy putt for some considerable time, take the lie of the ground, and then carefully send the ball some two or three inches wide of its destination? He tries the putt again, hits the ball straight for the back of the hole, and in it goes; he looks surprised, and murmurs something sounding like 'borrow.' Yes, he imagined he saw something that never existed; his vision and imagination were too keen. It is generally recognised that experience is of great value on the 'green,' and so it is when judgment of distances is concerned, and it is in this respect that a veteran has the pull over a youthful antagonist—his practised eye can readily take in the allowances which have to be made on account of the lie of the land. He may occasionally be deceived, but it is seldom that he is very wide of the mark. The great secret of putting, however, is to strike the ball truly, and this is mainly a question of touch and nerve, backed up by confidence. The player who imagines he is going to hole a putt invariably does so, the player who imagines he is going to miss a putt, however short, invariably misses it. It is a moral impossibility to teach a player how to putt. Putting is a gift; a putter is not a delicate weapon to handle, it has not the balance of a billiard cue, while the green has not been laid with a spirit level, and consequently there is a certain degree of chance whether the ball finds the hole or not; but it is always well to remember that if the ball is not struck truly it will not run truly from the face of the club. By striking truly, I do not necessarily mean the centre of the club, although I believe it is always a safe principle to patronise that portion of the club-face. The wrists must be free and working in unison; and to enable the wrists to work together an excellent idea is to interlock the fingers of the two hands,

Mr. H. H. Hilton, at Top of Swing for Half Brassey Approach.

as when handling any species of golf club the left wrist works naturally, and should do the major portion of the task in hand. This method is far from essential to good putting, as I have seen several of the finest putters in the world holding their hands comparatively wide apart; but it will be found a help to those whom nature has not endowed with a delicate touch; and although a good putter is born, not made, it is always well to remember that a ball will run more truly off the centre than off any other portion of the face of the club. And the main object in putting is to hit the ball truly.

Many players when putting mark some spot between the ball and the hole, at a point which they consider is the correct line, if the putt is to go down. Theoretically this principle may be correct, but it is not improbable that in the player's anxiety to mark the exact place over which the ball should pass, he may possibly take his eye off his ball, and a mishit is the inevitable result. And so you may go on propounding theories, *ad libitum*, with no satisfactory result in the end; putting is a gift, and this gift is given to few. There *are* consistently good putters in the world of golf, but even they fail occasionally.

STYLE IN GOLF

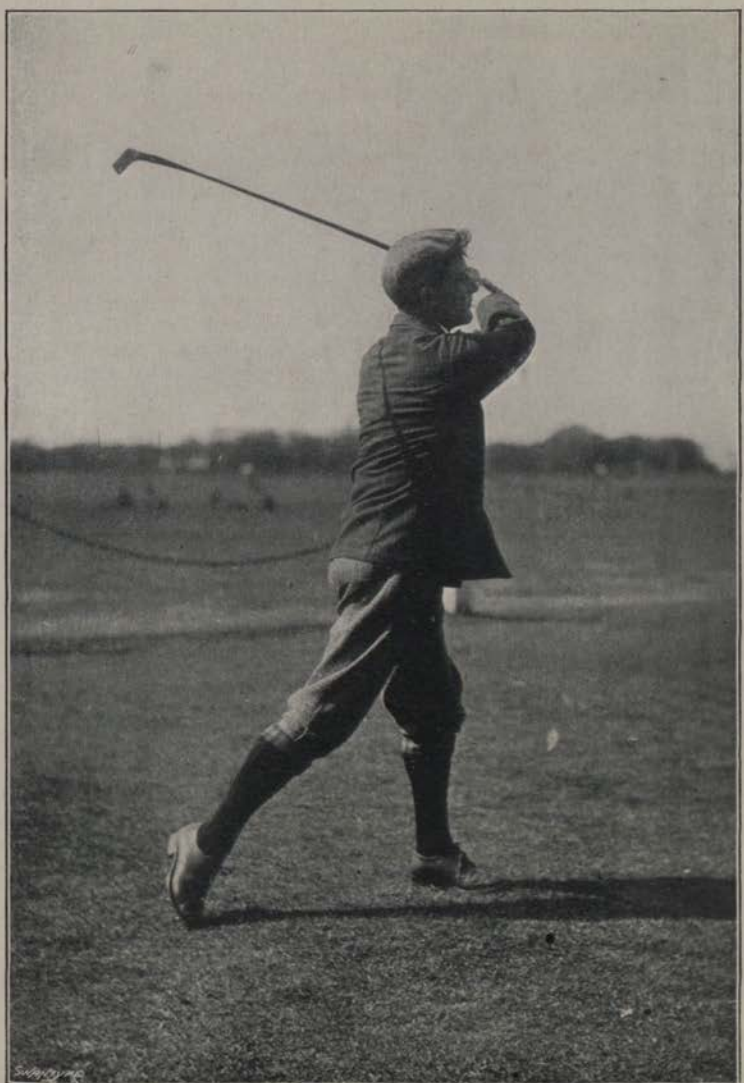
A good style does not necessarily mean a good golfer; by a good style I mean a style which appeals to one as nearly as possible approaching the ideal. It is hard to define one's ideal style, however, and when the task has been completed, successfully more or less, it is hardly gratifying to find that the general run of the golfing public have an entirely different interpretation of the qualifications which tend towards supplying the ideal, and in this, as in every other matter relating to the royal and ancient game, it usually resolves itself into a mere matter of opinion. Some may have better opportunities of forming a judgment; it may be that nature has gifted them with that intuitive faculty, which undoubtedly some golfers have, of discerning the idiosyncrasies,

faults, and failings of all players who are worthy of the name of 'golfer.'

During the past ten or twelve years opinions have altered very considerably as to the correct method to be employed in order to propel a ball the maximum distance, commensurate with the physical abilities with which the striker by nature has been endowed. It is useless to maintain, as many of the older school of players do, that physical force is of little avail in golf. If improperly applied it may be more harmful than useful, but the first-class golfer of the present day has exploded all the old theories, that the player in order to attain success must necessarily 'take it easy.' It is a fallacy, as many have found to their cost, as in the present days of high pressure it is not only necessary to strike 'far and sure;' you must strike 'very far and very sure,' or you will find yourself left behind in the race for supremacy.

At different times during my association with the game numberless players have been pointed out to me as ideal players. This opinion has generally been formed when they are in the heyday of their fame, and at those times it is not difficult to view these players through spectacles of a somewhat roseate hue. Their efforts result in success, and that alone is apt to prejudice one's judgment, particularly as such a judgment is always difficult to arrive at, on account of so many players achieving similarly successful results by entirely contrary methods of swinging and stance.

The long dashing swing of the St. Andrews school has always been looked upon as the orthodox swing to copy. I remember in my younger days always being told to take the club well round the neck in the backward swing. It was pointed out to me that it necessarily gave more freedom and power to the player. While admitting that natural conclusion, I found out that this extra freedom and power was earned at the expense of accuracy, and even in those days I had learnt the lesson that accuracy is the main essential towards achieving successful results; and the longer



MR. H. H. HILTON, AT FINISH OF HALF BRASSEY APPROACH.

I play the more is the wisdom of this theory forced upon me. To return to the St. Andrews school of play. I have always looked upon the late Hugh Kirkaldy as the typical representative of the St. Andrews swing proper, and among living players the swing of Mr. Laurence Auchterlonie is the nearest approach to the long free sweep of the champion of 1891; but, in order to show how opinions differ, at the amateur championship meeting at Hoylake in 1898 an experienced and well-known golfer from over the border pointed out Mr. J. H. Robb to me as a typical St. Andrews player. Can one imagine a greater contrast in swing than that between the two club mates, Messrs. Robb and Auchterlonie? The swing of the latter has all the attributes which we were taught to reverence in our youth, while Mr. Robb is short and rapid in his methods, nearer approaching what is generally accepted as the characteristics of the English school of golf. Whether the methods of Mr. Robb are correct, or the methods of Mr. Auchterlonie are correct, can be but a matter of opinion; but during the past few years there can be no doubt that players of all classes have shown an inclination to curtail the length of the backward swing, and this has been noticeable even among the players emanating from St. Andrews. They may admire, and even *traditionally* reverence, the abandon and dash of a Hugh Kirkaldy, but it is not conducive to accuracy unless they are gifted with the talent of a Kirkaldy, a gift which certainly very few golfers are endowed with.

Among modern golfers no player has a more beautiful swing of the club than Mr. John Ball junior. He apparently has the most wonderful command of the club; it sweeps round his neck, and returns on its downward journey without the slightest pause or sign of hesitation. It does not look an easy swing, owing to the abnormally wide stance he takes, as all players who stand with their feet wide apart appear to play a forcing game, owing to the free play of the body being somewhat restricted. Another player who has, in

reality, a beautiful swing, is Mr. J. E. Laidlay, although on account of the peculiar attitude he assumes before striking it would not at first appear so. I have heard his swing termed a 'half swing.' It is far from this, as instantaneous photography proves. It does not go far round the neck like that of his old time rival, Mr. Ball, but it is free and crisp, and well in command, which is one of the advantages of a short swing. To watch Mr. Tait play, nothing appears easier than golf. There is nothing of the dash of the St. Andrews school about his play, he always appears to be playing well within himself; and so I believe he is. But my impression has always been that it was not from choice, but from necessity, as he has an unruly member to look after, that dreaded right hand, and on the slightest sign of extra pressure that member is apt to assume an influence on the flight of the ball to which it has no legal claim. Occasionally it is brought into requisition, sometimes with beneficial results and sometimes to the contrary. It is an easy swing, a graceful swing, but hardly what can be called an orthodox swing, a swing apparently founded on the use and abuse of the right hand, and founded, it must be said, with extraordinarily beneficial results. A beautifully true swing is that of the amateur champion of 1895, Mr. Leslie Balfour-Melville. Nothing could be cleaner and neater than the actual swing of the club itself, but owing to a certain rigidity of the muscles right through the stroke, he is apt to appear laboured, but Mr. Balfour-Melville is of a sturdy build, and his golf is sturdy, and one cannot expect the freedom of a Hugh Kirkaldy from a player of his powerful physique.

Among the professionals Fernie has always appeared to me as the neatest of players. His wrist action is beautiful to watch; as quick as lightning goes the club round the neck, a quick turn of the wrist just before the club reaches its destination, and away travels the ball. It is, nevertheless, far from the orthodox, the swing of the body being sacrificed to the wrists, and in this respect bears a strong contrast to

the swing of Alec Herd, which is a beautiful example of freedom of shoulder; it is Hugh Kirkaldy over again, with a tighter grip and more command of the club. Harry Vardon, like Herd, is endowed with great freedom, but, as the gentleman who is generally recognised as the best judge of the game in St. Andrews remarked on first seeing Harry and Tom Vardon play in 1895, 'These Vardons are not pretty players.' And I think his judgment was not far from correct. The upward swing of the club is against all the recognised canons of tradition. The club is taken up perpendicularly, there is none of that fine circular sweep of Mr. Ball or Herd. It is a style of their own, it is certainly not orthodox; but in the case of the elder brother it is almost more than effective, a fact which places it outside the pale of criticism. And so we can wander through the whole list of first-class players.

There is a refreshing crispness about the style of Andrew Kirkaldy, a calculating manner and deliberation about the play of Park which instils one with confidence, but in no single instance do they supply the ideal of the orthodox in every particular. They have their peculiarities, maybe prompted by nature, maybe prompted by that natural power of imitation which is always so noticeable in golf.

Over the Border you find your younger generation of Laidlays playing off the left leg; unfortunately, Nature did not build them in the same mould as the famous ex-amateur champion, and their power of imitation has been their undoing. Similarly, at Hoylake you will find the younger generation playing off the right leg, standing what is termed open to the ball. As yet this method has not proved quite as efficacious as in the case of Mr. Ball. As Mr. Hutchinson once remarked, 'genius cannot be trifled with;' it can much less be imitated.

HAS GOLF IMPROVED?

Has golf improved? The older class of golfers, who remember Allan Robertson and young Tom Morris in his

brilliant meteoric career across the golfing horizon, say Nay; the younger school of golfers, whose golfing education only commenced after the passing away of these two old-time celebrities, say Yea; to which the old school reply, 'How can you form an opinion? You never saw either Young Tom or Allan play.' This is only too true, and this is where lies the weakness in the armour of the arguments of the younger school; but against this they can bring forth a number of hard, stern facts which are difficult to dispute. Scores are recorded now which were never even dreamt of five-and-twenty years ago; courses are undoubtedly kept in much finer condition nowadays, the horse mower was an unknown luxury to the ancients. Again, clubs have improved, and players have the advantage of many years of experience in connection with the manufacture of balls. But do these advantages compensate for the enormous disparity in the scores of twenty-five or thirty years ago and those of the present day? That is the real basis of the argument, and I am afraid that it can never be settled to the satisfaction of both sides.

My experience of the royal and ancient game unfortunately does not go far enough back to remember the days of Young Tom, as when first I began to take an interest in the game his fame was but a memory in the minds of men—a memory, however, which will never be forgotten, and golfers may come and golfers may go, but it is very much open to doubt whether any golfer will be quite the idol of the day as Young Tom was during his brilliant career, and certainly no golfer since, probably not even Harry Vardon, has shown quite the decided superiority over all rivals that he was called upon to meet as did the pride of St. Andrews. It was not merely a question of one season's brilliant play, as from the very commencement of his golfing career almost to the time of his sad demise he may be said to have brooked no rivals. Naturally the question arises, whom had he to compete against? Certainly not the strength of field a professional of the present day has to meet. There were good

players in those days, but they were few; probably the players who had any chance of success against him could be counted on the fingers of one hand, and that is where the difficulty of comparing his form with the Vardons, Herds, and Taylors of the present day really lies. The scores of the latter are undoubtedly far ahead of anything Young Tom accomplished, but they have had the advantage of finding greater obstacles to overcome, and that it is an advantage the past ten years' golf has plainly proved. Experience may account for a great deal of the improved form among young players, but among experienced players, those who may be said to have served their apprenticeship and been through the fire, we must look for some other cause to account for the decided improvement in the general run of the play, an improvement which has certainly taken place during the past ten years or so, and I have no hesitation in saying that it is chiefly due to increased competition, association with players of an equal or higher standard of excellence, and that consequent spirit of emulation which tends to unearth any latent talent which may be lying dormant. And it is in this respect that I think that Young Tom was placed at a disadvantage with his *confrères* of the present day. He had a certain number of opponents to meet, whom he invariably vanquished, and it is said that the greater the apparent task the more brilliant was his play; and, though I am of a contrary opinion to those who assert that his performances were equally brilliant with those of the leading players of the present day, still it is not improbable that had Young Tom been in his prime at the present moment he might have even out-Vardon'd Vardon.

To return to more modern times, it is not difficult to draw a comparison within the past five or six years. The tendency of the age is to lengthen links; still, records are continually reduced, and it is difficult to say when they will stop. But unless there is a great improvement in the implements of war, it certainly appears there must be a limit, and

that limit must certainly soon be reached. It may be that some golfing Goliath may turn up who can regularly drive holes of three hundred yards in one, but as yet this Brobdignagian golfer is in prospective, and we are quite satisfied to worship at the shrine of a Blackwell or a Rolland, as they drive quite far enough for ordinary mortals. It is not, however, to ordinary individual records that we must turn for a proof of the improvement which has taken place; it is to the higher level of general excellence in all important competitions. As an instance we may take the open championship contests. Who thought for a moment that the winning score at Prestwick this year would be as low as 307, or an average of under 77 for each round? Prestwick golfers? Certainly not; they placed a much higher value on the merits of their course as a difficult test of the game. But not only was Vardon 307, but two other players ran him very close indeed, a difference of one and two strokes respectively, and at least four players returned totals lower than the generally accepted idea as to what the winning score would be. Now the winning score on the previous occasion on which the championship was played at Prestwick, in 1893, was 322, or an average of over 80 a round. The weather conditions were certainly not favourable on that occasion, but the difference in the weather conditions in 1893 and 1898 could hardly be said to account for a disparity of nearly four strokes per round. And this lesson is taught right through all the important competitions which have taken place during the past two or three years; the scores are lower, the courses are virtually the same, and we are forced to the conclusion that to produce these results the play must naturally be better.

To revert to amateur golf, we may take the case of the play at St. Andrews and Hoylake. In the former case the scores are undoubtedly lower than they were twenty-five, ten, or even five years ago. It has been pointed out that literally the same players are taking prominent places at the present

moment as was the case five, ten, or even twenty years ago. This naturally leads one to the conclusion that the course must necessarily be becoming easier year by year; but I think that golfers of the old school are somewhat apt to overestimate the advantage gained by the increased breadth of the course—it is broader, certainly, even in my recollection. However, as I am hardly qualified to discuss a question of which I am avowedly ignorant, I must come somewhat nearer home and quote the golf players at Hoylake as an example. I remember the time when a score of 83 or under had an excellent chance of securing first place in the scratch competitions at Hoylake—that was not many years ago, barely ten. What chance would such a score have at the present moment? Literally none—that is, under average conditions of weather. Still, the Hoylake course is admittedly longer than it was, and the older school of golfers maintain that the green is not and will never be what it was in the old days; and as bad condition naturally tends towards indifferent lies, we can only conclude that the course is more difficult than was the case ten or fifteen years back. Still the scores are on a decreasing scale year by year.

To account for this improvement is a difficult task to take in hand. Golfers of the present day are apparently not endowed with superior physical attributes to those of a generation back, and certainly the material from which clubs are fashioned nowadays is not superior to that employed in the days of Hugh Philp. In those days the demand was small, and the club-maker could afford carefully to select and season his wood. In these days of increased demand he has very little opportunity of doing so; the public require golf clubs, and they get them, some good, some bad, and some indifferent, and fortunate is he who obtains the former, as a good shaft is a pearl beyond price. As there is no shadow of doubt that the sawn hickory of the present day is but a poor substitute for the split hickory of old times, it may be that one at times is fortunate in obtaining what is termed 'a good

bit of wood;' but even these have not the vitality or lasting power of the old split hickory, a fact admitted by all classes of players. And although the old school are fain to admit that the first-class players of the present day obtain a greater length than they did in the days of Young Tom and Allan Robertson — recent results conclusively prove that they must do—it may be that the St. Andrews celebrities in question had quite the power at command that the leading players of the present day have, but they were apparently afraid to use it. And we have only to turn to that interesting volume by the Rev. J. G. McPherson, called 'Golf and Golfers,' in which he explains the manner in which Allan Robertson played the sixth or 'Heathery' hole at St. Andrews —short of the bunkers from the tee, over the bunkers with his second and a spoon shot up to the hole side, holing in five.

Yes, Allan Robertson probably obtained as beneficial a result by his pawky play as the average of first-class players of the present day, who probably as often take five or six as four to this particular hole. But suppose during the course of these three spoon shots something came amiss—a bad lie might be sufficient—how would Allan have fared? Badly I think. Or even how would a player who followed this mode of procedure fare against, say, Andrew Kirkaldy, who habitually reaches this green with ease in two? Again badly, I think. It would be tempting Providence by placing too great a premium on accuracy and superiority in the short game. No, the race goes to the swift in the days of the present, risks are taken which were never thought of in the old days. It may not be due to any superiority of talent that these risks are successfully overcome, but the ever increasing number of first-class players has had a beneficial effect in sifting the wheat from the chaff. These risks have to be taken, and unless a player can successfully overcome them he will find himself left behind in the fight for fame. Even during the past five years those who have followed the game closely have noticed an im-

provement in first-class play, and I have always thought that the advent of J. H. Taylor in the world of first-class golf was in a sense responsible for this improvement. His play during the championship week at Prestwick in 1893, unsuccessful as he eventually proved to be, came as a revelation to many of the older school of golfers; he played full shots up to the hole side with an amount of accuracy and apparent *sang froid* which came as a revelation to them. 'Take your cleek for safety,' was the old motto. Taylor ignored this safety play with wonderful results, and unearthed new possibilities in the game, which other players have unconsciously copied and have conquered, with the result that other 'Richmonds' are in the field to challenge the supremacy of 1895 and 1896. That Taylor's play has deteriorated, as many assert, I cannot believe for one moment. He can still hold his own, as he has proved on many occasions during the season 1898. But a player like Harry Vardon has, while equalling the accuracy of the Wimbledon professional, been able to produce a slight degree of extra power which has turned the scale in his favour. And watching closely the play of the first-class professional one is forced to the conclusion that it is the accuracy and power in the long game which tells in the end. Not only has a player to drive a long ball, but he has to drive consistently far, for, as one well-known professional remarked at the conclusion of the meeting at Prestwick this year, 'it is galloping all the way.' Steady, accurate golf is of no avail, it must be both brilliant and accurate; and the present generation of players, recognising this fact, have in consequence accomplished performances which five years ago would have been considered bordering on the impossible. Why, for instance, should a player like Willie Park be showing better form than when he secured the championship in 1887 and 1889? He was then at an age which is generally recognised as the prime of golfing life. But that he is a finer player now, I think, is generally recognised on all hands. And, to conclude with a purely personal reference, I must acknowledge that I now

attempt strokes which, although I knew them to be possible some years back, I never then attempted, as the general standard of play did not call for such risks to be taken; unconsciously this latent talent is unearthed by that spirit of emulation which is caused by increased competition. That the standard of play has improved during the past five years I feel certain, and I am equally positive that the standard was higher then than it was ten years previously, as my memory serves me that far. Unfortunately, I cannot hark back to the days of Allan Robertson, nor even to the days of Young Tom, but if the standard was as high as it is at the present moment the records of the past certainly do not show it.

A FEW THINGS WORTH REMEMBERING

After giving a club a fair trial, and finding that it does not suit you, keep it not; it will only cause trouble and vexation of spirit. Happier is the golfer who has four clubs that suit him, than he who has forty which do not.

Always practise with the club which supplies the weakest part of your game; the natural inclination is to sally forth and knock the ball about with the club which gives you most satisfaction. Familiarity breeds contempt, and it is not improbable that you may become too familiar with that club; and there is no greater enemy to combat in the game than broken confidence. Try to strengthen the weak part of your game, the strong part will look after itself if not abused.

Try to get the grips on the handles of your clubs somewhat of a similar thickness—that is, as far as the balance of the different clubs will allow. Habit is a great factor in golf, and sensitive hands are apt to resent a sudden change in grips.

Habitual golfers should never neglect their hands—a stitch in time is worth nine, and a cracked hand is difficult to heal. After a hard day's play, sore hands can readily be relieved by a free application of vaseline, glycerine, or any similar sub-

stance. Skin does not crack when soft and pliable, it only cracks when hard and dry; and this fact very few golfers appear to realise, their main object being to harden their hands—a fatal mistake.

Don't oil the shafts of your clubs immediately after they have received a severe soaking. Oil will keep moisture out, but it will also keep moisture in; and, being kept in, it is apt to rot the shafts.

When playing a foursome, do not remind your partner about his bad strokes until the game is over. You may rest assured that he did not foozle the ball on purpose; and even a gentle reminder is only apt to increase his anxiety, and you never know when you may be guilty of a similar error. An anxious player never makes a good foursome partner; he only irritates both himself and his partner, and irritation is fatal to successful combination.

A change in putters is often beneficial. Good putting is mainly the result of confidence, and broken confidence is often more disastrous than no confidence at all. Do not necessarily desert your favourite putter altogether, but carry a spare putter if the size of your bag will allow it; and if your trusty friend deserts you, have resort to the alien and stranger. The immediate result may not be beneficial, but it may have the result of restoring your confidence when you take the old weapon in hand again.

When playing a match, do not watch your opponent too closely. Play your own game and let him play his. His good strokes are apt to have a demoralising effect on your own play, and his bad strokes are conducive to a feeling of over-confidence or carelessness, both of which are fatal.

CHAPTER III

APPROACHING

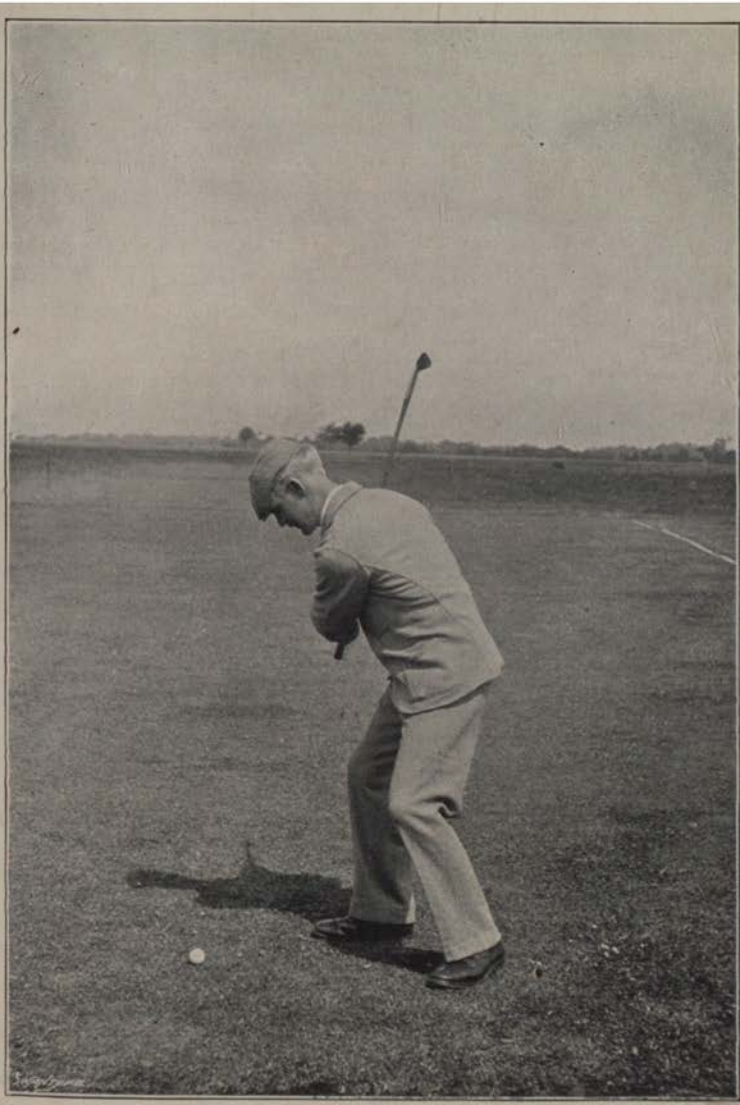
BY J. H. TAYLOR

APPROACH shots, in the usually accepted sense of the term, are those wherein the player, being less than a full shot from the hole, but not on the putting green, has, in addition to keeping the ball straight, to judge also the amount of strength necessary to get the required distance. When a full shot is played, whether to reach the hole or merely through the green, the object in each case is to get as far as possible with the particular kind of club used, and the swing for both shots is the same. Although the former of the two could reasonably be called an approach shot, insomuch as the player really does approach the hole and is guided by the distance it is from him as to the kind of club he uses, yet I do not propose to treat it as such. Being a full shot, it is played with a full swing, and my intention is to deal only with approaches which are played with less than a full swing. The range, therefore, which I shall cover will include all shots from about one hundred yards downward, until the ball is actually on the putting green. In order to become a good approach player, one must learn, first, to get the ball well into the air; second, to keep the ball straight; third, to judge the necessary strength; fourth, to put cut on the ball.

First, to get the ball well into the air. It often happens that immediately in front of the hole, within a distance of about thirty or forty yards, there is some hazard which

completely barricades the way. The only possible means of avoiding it is by lofting clean over, failing which grief must inevitably follow. But even when there are no hazards in the way, to play a ball along the ground is to place oneself so fearfully at the mercy of accident that the former method is far preferable. Second, to keep the ball straight. As shown above, the first thing necessary is to get the ball into the air, and the next thing is to keep it straight, for though it may have been beautifully lofted over every difficulty, yet if it be given a little slice or pull, it will still be off the green at one side or the other, with the probability that three more strokes will have to be played ere the hole is finished where two would otherwise have sufficed. Of course in all parts of the game it is important to keep straight, but particularly is it so in approaching. Third, to judge the necessary strength. It will be obvious to all that judgment of strength must of necessity have a great deal to do with approach play. The most perfectly played shot in other respects, if it either falls short of the green or sails triumphantly over the flag, can scarcely be called anything but a bad one. Fourth, to put cut on the ball. The object of putting cut on a ball is that it may stop very soon after it falls. This on some courses is absolutely necessary, as the greens are very small and keen, while immediately surrounding them the ground is very rough. A ball played without any cut would in the ordinary course of events have much more run after it fell than a ball that was cut. It would therefore have to be pitched considerably short of the hole to allow for that run, and while it might prove a good shot, it would be just as likely to turn out badly, not from any misjudgment on the part of the player, but from the difference in the kind of fall which the ball received, or from the accidents which happened to it after it began to run towards the hole. On the other hand, a ball played with cut, if not pitched actually on the green, could be dropped so near the edge as to reduce to a minimum the risk of stopping short, while the cut it had on would prevent

its running over the green. This shot with skilful treatment is a very great boon to the player. The different kinds of clubs with which people have played and still play approach shots are very numerous. From the short spoons and baffys of the olden time, which, to say the least, have wellnigh become obsolete, we have come to playing them now almost exclusively with iron clubs. The different kinds of irons, however, used for this purpose are very many. There are those who play with a lofting iron or some similar club which is so much laid back in the face that with an ordinary straightforward swing the ball is sent very high, and the strength of the stroke being thus expended in the air, the ball falls almost dead at the finish. The difficulty of playing with this club is very great. The extra amount of loft on the face makes it necessary to hit very hard to get only a short distance, and as a consequence unless it is struck quite true the ball is very unlikely to be left on the green. If a little too much turf should be taken, it will not get more than about halfway, while anything short of hitting well under it will probably send it about as far again past. A further objection to lofting irons is that having long blades they will not readily lift a ball from a rough, and especially a cuppy, lie. Others play their approaches with a medium iron, and on many links this can be done with a fair amount of success; for the putting greens being large and the turf generally in good condition there is plenty of room to allow for the extra amount of run which the ball will have after it pitches. Seaside courses are generally very good in this respect, but even then the hole is sometimes placed just beyond a bunker or behind a belt of rushes which allows the player very little margin for this kind of stroke. On many courses, as I have already said, it would be utterly impossible, what with the small greens and their rough surroundings, to play in this manner with the least hope of success. Disappointment would meet the player at every turn until he could scarcely help becoming thoroughly disgusted. These are difficulties chiefly confined

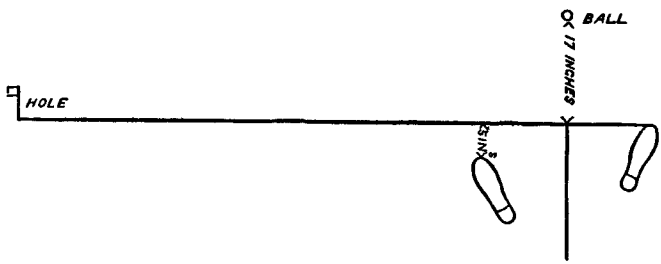


J. H. Taylor, approaching with Mashie, at Top of Stroke.

to inland links, but the man who can successfully overcome them need not be afraid of facing the less difficult. I think I may safely say that the most popular club of all for approaching with is the mashie, and in my opinion it well deserves its popularity. I do not mean to say that it is altogether the easiest club to play with, for it certainly is not. Having a short blade, it requires accurate hitting, and one not accustomed to use it might find this painfully true, as it is astonishing how easy it is to hit the ball on the socket of the club and thus send it off at right angles from the hole. Practice, however, will put this matter right, and when confidence has been gained in the use of it, it is wonderful what a mashie will do. Having once mastered it, one is well rewarded for the extra trouble taken in doing so. I have always played my approaches with a mashie, and it is the favourite club of my set. The one I use is fairly heavy, the head being large and the blade rather deeper than usual. The shaft is short and stiff, the complete length of the club, from the heel to the end of shaft, being 39 inches. It is stiff because I like all clubs stiff, but more particularly is it so because approaches have so often to be played from heavy lies, and I very much dislike to feel the shaft tremble as soon as the head touches the ground. To approach well, the stroke must be played firmly and the club carried through, which can be done much better with a stiff shaft, as it will not so easily be affected by the resistance it may meet. In attempting to describe my method of playing approach shots, it must be remembered that while what I say is an analysis of the swing which I take for the various shots, so far as I can make it out, I am not at all conscious when playing of doing each thing minutely as here put down. The thought as to how far my club should be taken back, as to where the swing should end, or anything of the sort, seldom if ever occurs to me, but having made a calculation as to the distance that the hole is from me I play the shot almost mechanically. This, of course, is the result of continual

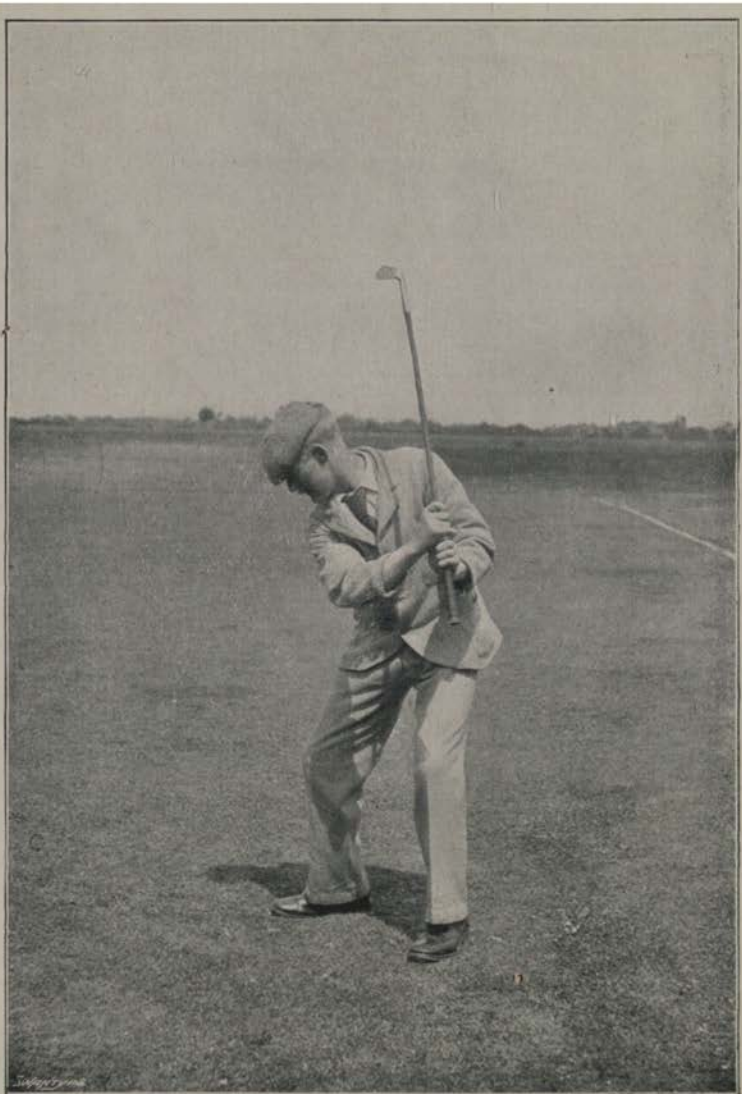
practice, and although no one will be likely to play very well while it is necessary to be thinking about each part of the swing, yet this stage must be gone through at first if there is to be ultimate success. One has to take many things into consideration before laying down hard and fast rules for other players, yet there are some principles which one might readily believe should hold good throughout the golfing world. One of these is that the length of the backward swing should always decide the distance which the ball is to carry, and not the greater or smaller amount of strength which is put into the forward swing. If the shot is a long one the swing back should be proportionately long, but if short then the swing should be short also. In every case the downward swing should be a smart even stroke with all the strength that can comfortably be got into it. It must be observed that I say 'comfortably,' as any undue effort will introduce jerk into the swing and certainly spoil the stroke. On the other hand, a mistake made by many is to take nearly a full swing for a short shot, endeavouring to regulate the strength as the club descends. I would be equally emphatic on this point, as I think the player who adopts this method is handicapping himself for life. Let this, then, be borne well in mind, that the length of shot should have a direct effect upon the backward swing, which, in its turn, should affect the forward, just as the forward movement of a pendulum depends upon and corresponds with the backward movement. This being so it must be apparent at once that just so far as the club is taken back it should be carried forward after the stroke is delivered. This should also be carefully attended to, as it will insure the stroke being all the more firmly played. The club should be held with both hands as firmly as possible, with the wrists kept tight. As to how far it should be drawn back for the various length shots must depend to a great extent on the ability of the player for getting a ball along. Some can get very much further with the same length swing than others, because they are stronger

in their forearms and wrists. For instance, while with a three-quarter swing I can only get about ninety yards, there may be others who could easily get a hundred and five yards, and others again who would have to swing quite as far to get only seventy-five yards. Experience alone must settle this matter, but let it be fully understood that each one will do well to abide by his own individuality. Having discovered your ability, be content to remain by your discovery and do not try to do more than you can do. When I have a shot of about a hundred yards, I generally play it with a sort of medium iron in preference to a full shot with the mashie, as the latter is not so easy to keep straight. Grasping the iron firmly with both hands, I stand to the ball in just the same manner as I do with the driver. The right foot is in advance of the left about four or five inches. The knees are slightly bent, otherwise I stand as firmly as possible on both feet. The weight of the body is thrown mostly on the right leg. If a straight line were then drawn from the toe of my right foot to the hole, and then another line at right angles from the first to the centre of the space between my two feet, the ball would be directly opposite the second line and about seventeen inches outside the first, thus:



Of course the distance one is from the ball must always depend on the lie of the club and the length of the shaft. Being now in position, I draw the club backward until it is about midway between the perpendicular and horizontal over the right shoulder. The right arm to the elbow remains

almost close to the side, but moves backward a little to assist in getting the club round. The left shoulder is turned to within an ace of being opposite the ball. The right leg is very firm, supporting nearly the whole weight of the body. The left leg is resting on the ball of the foot with the heel slightly raised from the ground, and the knee bent towards the toe of the right foot. The circle formed by the club-head in drawing it back had a slight inclination towards the body, which circle is again described as the club descends towards the ball. The stroke being delivered, the swing finishes with the club just in the same position over the left shoulder as it previously was in over the right. The weight of the body is transferred to the left leg, which has regained a firm footing. The right foot is drawn up on to the toe, and the right knee is bent in towards the left. Of course my eye has been kept on the ball during the stroke, and it is better to still watch the ground a moment after the ball has been despatched than to run the risk of looking away before it has really been struck. A shot of ninety yards or thereabouts I play with a mashie in just the same manner as above, with the exception that the hands are held slightly more forward, which brings the face of the club more upright, and consequently does not lift the ball so high. Until I get down to about seventy yards I do not usually put cut on the ball, as the amount of loft which it has from a longer shot with the mashie is quite sufficient to stop it pretty soon after it falls. The longer shots, therefore, are played with an abbreviated but otherwise ordinary straightforward swing. The club is laid on the ground with the face aiming straight to the hole. For a shot of seventy yards I stand facing a little more round towards the hole, or, in other words, as though I were aiming the least bit to the left. The face of the club, however, is now turned outwards, until it looks as though it would send the ball rather to the right of the hole, so that while I am standing to go a shade to the left the club-face is aiming a shade to the right. I still grasp the club



J. H. Taylor, approaching with Mashie, at Finish of Stroke.

quite firmly, as in fact I do with every shot. The weight of the body is now supported equally by each leg. In drawing the club back, at the same time slightly turning the left wrist, the head describes part of a circle straight from the hole. The left knee bends towards the ball, but the feet remain firm on the ground. Having reached almost to the perpendicular, I bring the club down with the swing going through a little to the left of the hole. If the club were held naturally, according to my position and the direction of the swing, the ball would inevitably go to the left, but the face of the club being turned towards the right of the hole the point of impact is not immediately behind the ball, but slightly on the inner side. The consequence of this, if the swing were carried straight through towards the hole, would be to send the ball to the right, but the two opposite influences being brought to bear upon it in one and the same moment—the influences, namely, of being drawn to the left and cut to the right—it is led to choose the middle course and go straight, while a rotary motion is also imparted which causes it to stop very soon after it falls. The swing finishes when the club has reached the perpendicular opposite the left shoulder. This, so far as I am able to give it, is the explanation why my approach shots generally fly straight, although they have cut on, while the usual tendency of balls played with cut is to start out to the left of the line and curl in as they near the finish. For a shot of about fifty yards I stand facing the least bit more towards the hole, with the ball opposite the left heel. The knees are rather more bent and the club held short. The face of the club is aiming still more to the right of the hole. The club is drawn back, in this case rather away from the body, until the head gets just above the horizontal, when the downward swing is again cut across the ball as before. The swing finishing with the club in a horizontal position to the left, leaves the face of the club pointing skyward. If the ball is lying at all badly it becomes necessary to take a piece of turf with the stroke,

but for the shot to be at all a good one the club must cut in immediately behind the ball, most of the turf being taken after the ball has been struck. All shots after this I play very similarly. Facing still more towards the hole, I get the ball opposite the middle of the left foot. If a line were now drawn from my right toe straight to the hole as before, the ball would be only nine inches outside that line instead of seventeen. With the hands held forward and the club face turned well out, the stroke is played in the same manner as previously explained. I would repeat what I have already said, that all shots must be played firmly up to the hole, as the general mistake is to play them nervously and so get little more than half the distance. Every player must use his own judgment as to how near the hole he ought to drop the ball, so much depending on whether the green is keen or heavy, or from which quarter the wind is blowing, should there happen to be any.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Perhaps I may be allowed to say a word or two by way of comment on this very clear statement of the methods by which the man whom I regard as the most accurate approach player in the world achieves his results. The chief point, I think, that a spectator notes about Taylor's approach play is the fixity with which he keeps his eye, not only on the ball, but actually on the spot that the ball has left for a moment after it has gone. 'I have discovered,' said a great man once, '*the secret* of golf. You must go on looking at the place where the ball was for a *full minute* after it has gone.' A full minute! This appears rather an extreme measure of time, and if consistently occupied would materially increase the time taken up by a round—a hundred minutes, to wit, if the player went round in a hundred. Perhaps Taylor's measure of 'a moment,' if not so definite, is more practical.

A second point worthy of special observation is that for

distances approaching one hundred yards Taylor uses his iron in preference to playing the mashie shot with extra force.

Noteworthy again is his counsel to determine the length of shot by the length of swing, rather than by the muscular force applied.

I also read with peculiar interest what he has to say of the grip of the hands, and especially his advice that they should always grip tightly. I am sure he is right, and I say this although I have elsewhere recommended that the grip be light in approaching if it is wished that the ball should stop very dead on alighting. I have seemed to myself to get a deader loft on my own shots with this light grip, and I have spoken about it to Mr. Laidlay, whom I regarded at one time as the best approach player going, and found that he was of the same view. But I always felt, at the same time, that this light grip was a sacrifice of certainty made to dead pitching. Therefore, when Taylor can show, both by example and by precept, that the deadest possible pitching can be achieved with a tight grip, then I am more than ready to take back all I said in favour of the light grip, believing, as I do and always did, that the light grip makes for inaccuracy.

Most interesting of all, however, is the manner in which he explains his own most wonderful power of playing up a much cut ball without any curve in the air. I think this accomplishment is rather a typical feature of modern approaching. Mr. Hilton is a master of it. Taylor is a marvel at it too. The old school of approachers used to play the ball with a curve from the left. The new school play their approaches dead straight. And yet the cut is there—the ball drops 'like a poached egg' on the green. Mr. George Glennie's great maxim, of 'pitch your iron shot to the left of the hole' is no longer required. We have overcome the trouble—at least, Taylor and one or two others have—that it was designed to meet.

CHAPTER IV

HOW TO PRACTISE

By H. G. Hutchinson

Golfers, generally speaking, would play a deal better if they practised more. It is rather useful to state the fact thus broadly, in the terms of a truism, because it may help to make us realise how universally, in practice, we deny its truth. 'Are we not always practising?' many a one will ask indignantly, who indeed plays golf perhaps daily—often enough, one might suppose. Quite often enough, is the answer, but the golf that you are daily playing takes the form of match play. You are constantly engaged in trying to do the holes in the least possible number, to beat this or that opponent. But this is not, in the true sense, practising at all. In all the treatises that profess to teach the billiard-playing art, you are told to practise particular strokes, and more particularly those strokes in which you are most liable to fail; and this advice, excellent in regard to billiards, is no less excellent in application to golf—indeed, its application is even more proper to the outdoor game in proportion as it offers a greater variety of strokes, by reason, largely, of the many different clubs whose use it requires. There is no game, probably, that equals golf in its infinite variety of strokes and circumstances, and to be a master of the game you must be a master of them all. It needs, therefore, that you should give every stroke, with each club, its special study. If you fail to do this you fail of being armed at all points. There is a weak joint in your harness, and you may be very

sure that in course of the next match your enemy will find it out.

And how are you to mend this joint? By perpetual practice with the club and at the stroke in which you are deficient. But how is this to be done in a match? You cannot play over again a stroke in which you have failed. If it should be your brassy that has played you false, it is likely enough that many holes may be lost and won before you have occasion to use the same club again, and possibly the whole course of the round may not give you another opportunity. And how, under these sad circumstances, does the average golfer act? He goes to his home bewailing to his wife and household that his brassy has failed him—he is 'clean off his brassy shots'—and on the morrow out he goes again for his match, without any further trial of the evil weapon, his harness no more proof than before. Thus the majority of golfers go on, day after day, playing match after match, taking no special thought about the specially faulty feature of their game, until they come to the occasion in the match which shall bring it into evidence. Then they complain again, loudly enough, but seldom take any steps towards a remedy of the trouble. They utterly ignore the maxim, that is really the most obvious truism, that they should practise themselves especially in that stroke in which they are weakest. They leave the matter to chance, to mend itself, and sooner or later they are justified of their wisdom—or of their folly. The matter does mend itself. Accidentally they hit a brassy shot or two correctly, the lost confidence comes back, and all is well.

But on this system the recovery is almost certain to come later rather than sooner—a deal later than they have every right to expect it to arrive if only they would take reasonable measures for restoring themselves to their golfing health. This reasonable measure would surely be to take out the club with which they have found their play defective, and in some quiet corner of the links to 'have it out with that club,'

to find out what is wrong with their use of it, to put the wrong to rights, and so to make themselves once again its master. Then when the next occasion for its use in match play arises they will take it with confidence from the caddie's hand, assured that they can use it with satisfaction, and out of that assurance drawing the successful result. Really there is no club so obdurate, no stroke so difficult, that by careful work of this kind one may not win back such measure of skill as one once possessed with it. It may not, very likely, be the skill of a champion, but it will yield up again, sooner or later—and a deal sooner for this zealous study—so much of its secret as the individual golfer has ever won from it.

All this is so very plain, simple, and obvious, that it would seem a manifest impertinence to suggest it to the meanest golfing intelligence if it were not so universally ignored. Of the men you will meet on the links perhaps four out of every five, on an average, will tell you that they are off their game. They cannot play the putter, the iron, the driver, or whatever it may be. Now and again one in half a dozen will tell you that he is 'off' with all his clubs. But his is an exceptional case, perhaps past remedy, and even he, if you question him, will prove to be playing some department or other of the game fairly to his satisfaction. The great majority are 'off' with some one club. Yet, out of all this army of sufferers, how many will you see going out upon the links, after the day's matches are over, and really trying to improve themselves in that wherein there is so much room for improvement? Not, it may safely be asserted, one in ten.

These remarks do not have reference so much to the beginner painfully learning the game, whose efforts are infantile with all clubs alike. He cannot, as yet, go off his game or lose it, for as yet he has no game to go off or lose. It would be vain to counsel him to take out and practise such clubs as he is defective with, for on the hypothesis of his being a beginner he should be defective with them all. If he is not he is a prodigy, and for prodigies

one does not offer suggestions. But when a man has evolved a certain game, there always arrive seasons—indeed, they are the general rule, rather than the exception—when some one or other stroke is not 'coming off' according to expectation, and it is him that we should like to see out on the links practising that stroke until he has recovered his property in it. Once upon a time there was a certain famous man who, even from the beginning, started on the principle of teaching himself each club at a time. His proposed system was to perfect himself first in use of the driver, in order to get a fair start from the tee, then to take up the brassy, in order to help him along the green towards the hole. Then, according to his proposal, he would make a special study of the iron and mashie, to land him on the putting green, and finally would devote himself to the putter, to the end of putting himself safely into the hole. The niblick, it is to be observed, did not enter into this curriculum of study, for on the hypothesis of perfect mastery attained with each club in turn the bunker would cease, for practical purposes, to exist, and with its non-existence would cease also all necessity—except in foursomes, which might be made the subject of a separate course—for the niblick's use. Now this was a scheme nobly conceived, and worthy of the master mind by which it was evolved; but, like the gigantic conceptions of Napoleon's later campaigns, it was too magnificent for war or golf. It failed owing to the weakness and liability to error of human nature. This great man failed to make himself master of any one of the abstruse subjects which he studied in such minute detail. Seeking to grasp the parts he lost the whole.

But this example of a noble failure, which failed rather because it pushed a principle too far and without proper sense of proportion, is nevertheless an illustration of the way in which the golfer, after attaining a certain general mastery over his clubs, may hope to perfect himself with each successively; only he must get the general mastery first, and

this is what the great man of our illustration failed to realise. The way of attaining that general mastery is dealt with by those writers who have given us yeoman's service in constructing this volume, and is to be found, besides, in many a volume that deals with the first principles of the golfing art. It is to those who have attained this elementary mastery that one ventures to offer these further suggestions.

The professionals are very fully alive to the virtue and value of this special practice. Even they 'go off' certain clubs and certain strokes, and when they have an important match in prospect you may always see them practising the clubs and strokes that they feel to require practice on the eve of the great day. Those clubs that are serving them well they will leave alone, careful to do nothing to disturb that confidence in them which is the secret of success. This confidence is everything. When you have fairly conquered, by this assiduous and single-minded practice, the club that bothered you, be sure that your last stroke in the practice course be a good one. If you are leaving off, do not leave off after an indifferent stroke—only after a really good one. Then the confidence that this good one gave you will remain with you as an invaluable possession when next you come to use the club in a match.

It is necessary to say a word of caution. Of the few men whom you will see thus practising a special club, some there will be who will put down as many as a dozen balls, and drive them off in rapid succession. This is useless work. Worse than useless—it is bad work. It is work that will do you harm. No man has the endurance, the strength of muscle, to hit a dozen, or even half a dozen, full shots properly in quick succession. Both eye and muscle tire. Three balls, driven one after the other, afford about the limit test of fairly taxed strength. Then go your walk after them; or, if a caddie is fetching them for you, rest awhile till he brings them back.

Perhaps it can scarcely necessary to point out to a

reasonable man that he should practise with his clubs from such lies as he is likely to require them in when playing a match; yet if we are to admit this we must then make the further admission that many golfers fail to be reasonable men. For it is quite common to see a man, when he does take out his brassy for some practice shots, place his ball carefully on a little tuft or elevation before addressing it—a lie from which he would scarcely ever think of playing his brassy in a match, but would always, unless the length of stroke did not require a full shot, take his driver. The proper and useful practice will rather be to put the ball in just such a cuppy or otherwise unfavourable lie as would induce him to use the brassy in a match. As before, the suggestion is of the most obvious nature, but again, perhaps for that very reason, the truth it contains often seems to escape notice. There is no stroke so humble or so uninteresting that its special practice will not repay you, if you feel yourself at all faulty in it. On such courses as Brancaster or Westward Ho! Prestwick or Sandwich, where the bunkers are often close to the putting greens, an occasional quarter of an hour is very well spent in practising niblick shots from them—not those shots of which the purpose is to get the ball as far out the bad lie as skill and muscle can carry you, but those in which the object is to hoist the ball over the impending bunker cliff and make it stop soon—presumably near the hole. The practice will give you immense confidence when you have to play this hazardous stroke with all the terrors of great issues, possibly of the issue of the match itself, depending on it. Your practice will enable you to tell yourself with confidence just how far behind the ball it is necessary to cleave with that downward stroke, directed not immediately upon the ball, but with the purpose of creating a sort of earthquake under it that shall 'boost' it up and over the bunker cliff. The sand of different links varies a deal in the quality of its stiffness, so that in some bunkers you have to hit an inch

or even more further from the ball than in others where the sand is heavier. A study of these differences is of great service to you when you are entering on a comparatively strange green.

And as there are differences of texture in the sand, so too there are differences in the texture of the soils, on different links. Some the iron, in the 'jerk' stroke, will cleave kindly. Others resist its cleaving impact, and on these it needs to hit the ball cleaner—with less of the downward motion that results in the jerk—than on softer soils. It scarcely needs to say that on coming to a strange course the strength of the putting greens should be a subject of your special study, and also the degree in which a ball played up to the hole off an iron or mashie grips the turf on falling, for this, too, is a quality that varies greatly on different greens.

There is one stroke of all others that should be made the subject of special practice, and that is the approach stroke, whether with the iron or mashie, according to your preference, or with the putter. The point of all others at which the professionals are better than the amateurs, generally speaking, seems to be this approach play and the long putting. The reason does not seem very far to seek. Most of the professional players have had their training, in boyhood, as caddies; on most links you may see the caddies constantly at practice with their own or their master's mashie or putter, playing at short holes of their own digging. Far less often do we see them practising the long shots, partly because they seldom have space at command for these, and partly because a master does not wholly approve of his best driver being wielded by the caddie. But short mashie strokes can hurt no mashie; and, whatever the reason, the fact remains that the majority of professional players have passed their schooling with the approaching club constantly in hand. The result is their deadly execution of this most deadly stroke.

Not only so, but on some links, as at St. Andrews in the old days, the bigger caddies play matches over the short holes (at St. Andrews these used to be laid out just in front of the Club-house, but they seem to have fallen much out of use now), often, it is to be feared, betting large stakes out of their day's earnings on the result.

All this incessant practice must have been the means of making many a fine approacher. The amateur, even as a boy, seldom devotes himself as assiduously to this special study. He is generally playing matches on the long links, seldom really practising. And probably it is by his fatal habit of 'laying the long putt dead' more than by skill in any other part of the game that the professional player wins his matches.

It is seldom indeed that you will see a professional go forth to play a match of any importance whatever without having stretched his muscles and exercised his eye by some practice strokes previous to starting. He would deem that he had neglected a valuable aid to ultimate success if he neglected this practice. Yet how often do we see an amateur at the pains to do the same? Very, very rarely. It is the custom—rather too much the custom—to look on the professional player as a man whose golf comes to him as a free gift—a heritage that he is born with. But the truth is, rather, that though natural aptitude of course counts for much, the golfer is made rather than born. He is no poet. Some of these professionals, to whom their skill means some portion of their bread and butter, have given a deal of thought, as well as work, to the game; and we of the amateur class may find much that is worth observation in the ways of those whose life business it has become. They have given, likely enough, more thought to it than we can afford; and there is no reason to suppose that they have thought less pregnantly.

The evil of driving off ball after ball until you are tired out, by way of practice, has been mentioned, but with in-

sufficient emphasis. Careless practice is worse than none, and it is impossible to be keen and careful when both muscle and eye are wearied. More than this, it may be said that carefulness without keenness is a human impossibility. The carefulness to which you force yourself is not true spontaneous carefulness; it is only a keen zest in your work that can make you truly and usefully careful. And this keen zest you cannot feel when your muscles are weary of their work and do not execute it gladly.

Therefore, so soon as you feel your practice work wearisome, drop it. Try a few approach shots, as a change, for practice in this can never come amiss; then take your weaver's beam again—the driver, brassy, or whatever it may be.

Again, in practice with these longer clubs, always aim at a mark. The driving into empty space may help you to a correct and free swing, but it will encourage you in an objectless way of driving, with too little regard of the ultimate fate of the ball. In the match this will not do, and there is no reason that the freedom of the swing should be lost because you have a care for the direction also. Take a bush, a tuft of grass, the brow of a hill—anything you please—on the line, and try to drive to, or over, that. Otherwise, if you content yourself with driving, merely driving, without thought of the direction, you may find yourself, when you come to important business in the match, hitting your ball well and freely may be, but constantly either to right or left of the proper line—a revelation which is very apt to be disconcerting, and so to undo the good benefit that should be your possession by virtue of your practice shots.

In your preliminary canter—the practice strokes previous to the commencement of a match—on a windy day, you will do well to test your driving both down the wind and against. You will be required to face both alternatives in course of the round, and it is as well to make sure that in both cases you are master of the circumstances before becoming involved in

them with great issues depending. A false step or two is very likely to occur while you are getting into your stride, and it is far better to execute these preliminary *faux pas* in practice than when the actual match is in full progress.

When you are at practice is the time to think of your form, of the *how* your shots are to be played, of the correct attitude, and of the correct swing. When you come to the stern business of the match, you ought not to have to bother yourself about these little details—about the petty means—you ought to have an open mind to concentrate on the great ends—namely, the ball and the hole. If you are then thinking too much about the grip, the stance, and the rest of the fifty-two elements that are commonly said to go to making up the perfect golfing swing, you are very apt to lose sight of the ball, to lose sense of the right timing of the stroke, and to miss the great and never to be recovered psychological moment at which you can strike the ball with confidence of success. This matter of 'timing' the stroke is one that is not sufficiently considered by the golfing instructors. They teach the correct way of making the club describe the correct circle or ellipse, but they generally do not dwell quite enough on the necessity of making the moment that club and ball meet the culminating point of the whole business—the point at which the greatest effort is to be exerted by the striker, the point at which the club-head is to travel with the greatest speed. Cricketers understand the timing theory, and appreciate it, better than golfers. They know that no hit ill-timed can drive the ball well, no matter what muscular effort is expended, and that a well-timed stroke of half the force will drive the ball more satisfactorily than an ill-timed one delivered with twice the energy. No doubt the necessity of accurate timing is brought more forcibly home to the cricketer by the fact that he has to deal with a moving ball, but it is scarcely less important for the golfer if he is to drive the ball perfectly. After a certain point, strength becomes a factor in the length of drive, but it is only after the point has been

passed at which practice has taught the hitting of the ball in the right way and with the right sense of time.

Instructors have every reason for not dwelling too much on this essential point—the correct timing of the blow—for it is an indefinable sense that is required, and a sense that no instruction can impart, to bring it home to a learner's mind. This much, at least, it is both safe and useful to say, by way of instruction anent it, that the common error is to put in the force too soon. The club-head cannot keep up its fastest pace all through the swing. There is one certain fastest point, and this fastest point should be at its moment of meeting the ball. The common error is to hurry that point, to be in such a hurry to get the club-head going at speed that it loses some of that speed before the ball is reached. For that reason the learner's attention—and every one should be a learner in the practice hours—should be greatly turned to what happens after the ball is hit. The effort should be to reach that one point of greatest speed of travel not an inch before, but rather two inches after, the ball is struck. The natural tendency is to reach it too quickly, and the reasonable remedy therefore is to aim to reach it a trifle late. And therefore, too, it is high praise of a golfer's swing to say of it that 'there is a deal of it after the ball is struck.' The tendency is to pull up too soon—at the instant of striking the ball—not to let the swing, and indeed to make the swing, finish itself out well. Does the reader know those pummelling machines which register the force of a fist blow? If he has any experience of them he will quickly remember that the blow that sends the needle on the dial flying round to mark a great force of percussion is not the blow delivered, howsoever violently, on the near side of the pummelling cushion, but the blow that goes right through into its depth, as though it would come out on the further side. This is the sort of blow that the golf ball wants, as if you wished to hit, not the side nearer to you, but the side further away, a tremendous stroke. It is an invaluable illustration to bear in

mind—invaluable not merely for this purpose of good timing and of sending the force of the blow well through, but also valuable as an index to the direction of the blow, and of the club-head at the moment of delivering it, which should be in the plane of the ball's intended flight. In some of the illustrations of the famous players—whose portraits, while executing their characteristic strokes, are included in the later pages of this book—may be seen many examples which will be pointed out with due emphasis of this 'deal of the swing after the stroke' which should be the ideal of the golfer's practice.

The sense of time, and putting in the force at the right moment, is valuable not in the driving strokes alone, but also in the shorter shots up to the hole. The manner in which the stroke is timed, so as to let the club-head come with greater or less speed on the ball, makes all the difference imaginable in the length that the ball will travel; and often a spectator, with but slight knowledge of the game, will exclaim in surprise at the distance that the ball flies off a clean-struck well-timed half iron stroke, while one who had given the matter a thought would see at once that the secret of its flight lay not in any remarkable muscular force applied in some abnormal manner, but simply in the fact that the utmost force that the gentle stroke contained was concentrated into the exact moment at which the club-head met the ball. The practice of the proficient differs of course from the practice of the tiro. The former is rather striving to keep what he has got, and to improve it, if at all, by insensible degrees; the latter is learning a new lesson. I believe no better advice can be given to both tiro and proficient alike than that which Willie Fernie is emphatic on—to practise the swing in front of a mirror. We then see ourselves as others see us and detect many unsuspected weaknesses.

For the actual tiro a most useful maxim has been invented by Philpot, the clubmaker and professional adviser to the Princes' Club at Mitcham. He instructs his pupils

to 'strike from a point.' Of course we all know that the stroke is to be a swing rather than a hit, and so on, so that perhaps the very word 'strike' is a little out of place; but the great thing in these golfing instructions is not so much to be logical, or etymological, or exact, as to convey to the learner's mind an idea of what he should try to do; and language for conveying a new idea to a man's mind is very difficult to find. Philpot, in his maxim, seems to have expressed the notion intelligibly—the notion that there should be a point of division between the up swing and the down, a definite point from which the down stroke should begin. Without this notion the up swing is apt to be vague, aimless, without limit. It is a useful maxim for the tiro to bear in mind that he should 'strike from a point.'

It is not a bad thing to practise yourself especially in those circumstances that are most distracting to you, so that familiarity shall divest them of their effect. If you are one of those who are especially put off the stroke by any one standing 'behind the eye,' as the saying is, it is no bad plan to practise with a caddie perpetually in that position, so that you may be accustomed to it. The old mariners found that the compass misguided them when there was ironstone in the country near; the modern mariner puts two great balls of iron, one each side of the compass, so that the iron afar off has comparatively no effect. This is the function of the caddie perpetually 'behind your eye.'

There are one or two points in which the caddie himself may well be given a little practice. It is to be presumed that the need of instructing himself in the elementary grammar of silence and immobility on the stroke will be obvious enough, though it may be a grammar hard for him to learn. At Westward Ho! there was at one time in vogue a system of qualifying examination for enlistment into the high-roll of caddie. The boys had to answer a series of questions that rather suggested the Shorter Catechism.

'What should the ball be teed with?' was one of these.

The most apparent answer would be 'With sand;' but as this is not always so, seeing that some play off artificial tees, an answer of more universal applicability seemed to be required, and the stereotyped answer was 'With care.'

Certainly this is always praiseworthy; but there is a special point about the teeing of the ball to which the caddie's attention ought to be directed, and yet which is seldom inculcated. We must all have suffered much from caddies whose practice it is to make a little heap of sand, and then do one of two things—either perch the ball so insecurely upon it that, time after time, it rolls off, or else, going to the other extreme, ram it down on the sand-heap in such manner that the ball is partially bunkered. Now, if any one will take the trouble to make the experiment, he will find that it is very difficult to take the ball and place it securely and yet delicately, as it should be placed, on the tee, unless some portion of the hand be laid on the firm basis of the ground during the operation. The lower part of the hand—that is to say, the knuckle of the little finger—should be rested on the ground, and with this steady basis to work on the ball can be perched up with the nicest adjustment. It seems a little matter to make so much bother about, but the perpetual rolling of the ball off the tee, or its alternative interment in the sand-mound, is so very annoying, and the remedy so very simple, that it is perhaps worth this brief remark.

In practice, and in unimportant matches, the methods should be adopted that you will use in great contests. Any variation of method is apt to put you off. Thus, if it be your opinion that you can gain a better notion of the line of your putts by studying the ground from hole to ball, as well as from ball to hole (and so great an authority as Willie Park says that the apparently correct line, as judged from the former point of view, is always the truly correct one), then accustom yourself to this double study in your practice matches. Do not practise, in short, in any slipshod manner,

or else you will find yourself a little put about when you have, of necessity, to alter this manner in the matches that you are keen to win.

Professionals, as a rule, gain a long advantage over amateurs from their greater faculty of laying their long putts near the hole, and this, I am convinced, is acquired by their more constant practice. The inference is that time spent in practice in this particular stroke cannot be wasted. This final point has been noticed before, but its importance makes it a good one to end up with, and it will bear the repetition. Knowing that Fernie had made a special study of the golfing swing, and had actually lectured on it, with good results, in different parts of England and Scotland, I asked him to jot down for me a few notes on the subject, and in response he has kindly written as follows:

'Any one looking at my photo will see top and finish of swing. You will observe that at the top of the swing the toe of the club points straight to the ground. The club points the same way at the finish of the swing. When this happens the club travels in its proper circle; otherwise the stroke will be pulled or sliced.

'I would strongly recommend any one wanting to learn the swing to practise in front of a mirror with a walking-stick or a toy club till he attains the true position. Of course the action of the feet must be attended to. Some players are inclined to turn more than they ought to on the left toe. If they would turn more on the right toe, after the stroke, it would steady the body a great deal better.'

No doubt more useful advice than that of practising before a mirror can scarcely be given and can scarcely be repeated too often. Without that precaution it is possible to continue indefinitely long in faulty ways, without a chance of perceiving the real cause of the error, but only lamenting its disastrous results.

CHAPTER V

A PORTRAIT GALLERY

Mr. E. BLACKWELL

Let us set the ball rolling—that is to say, let us open this gallery of portraits of eminent players engaged in the strokes that have had greatest effect in raising them to that eminence—with Mr. Edward Blackwell, both because he has an alphabetical claim to the position, and also because the general opinion credits him with being the longest driver in the world. I will take the liberty of quoting what Mr. Everard has to say of him in the Badminton book on golf, p. 415, 5th ed. 'He first came into notice in 1884, when a match was played at St. Andrews between him and Jack Simpson, the then champion, who at that time was at the very prime of his powers.' (Now, alas! he has been cut off by an untimely death.) 'In the end the amateur's tremendous driving proved too much for the professional, who was defeated by one hole in the thirty-six. So far as is known, Mr. Blackwell is the only player who has fairly driven the long hole in two each way; he was out practising, drove past the hole going out, turned back, and drove past it again; the average of each shot being about 260 yards. He returned to this country for a short time in 1892, was elected a member of the Royal and Ancient, played for his first medal, and won it, in 82, establishing a record. Details are:

Out: 6 4 5 5 5 5 5 3 4=42
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His power with the cleek simply beggars all description, and it would probably be no exaggeration to say that he can drive further with it than nine out of ten fine drivers can with a play club. His style in driving is the very ideal of orthodoxy; the swing, though extremely rapid, is so even and symmetrical that its rapidity does not specially attract attention. He holds the right hand quite loose, and puts every ounce of strength (and he is well endowed in that respect, especially in the wrist) into the stroke. There are many bunkers at St. Andrews which ordinary players avoid, or try to, by steering to one side or other, accounting it somewhat unfortunate if a long drive be trapped. For Mr. Blackwell these hazards do not exist; he plays to carry them, and rarely fails. Thus for him the distinguishing characteristics of the holes are entirely altered. When he won the medal his brother, Mr. Ernley Blackwell, tied for second with the Rev. E. D. Prothero at 85. On playing off the former, with an excellent 83, was victorious. Thus the two brothers found themselves in the unique position of first and second medallists.'

Mr. Everard's brief account is excellent in every way. It lays stress on every salient merit of execution, so far as the brief space allotted him permits; there is only one point on which he seems to have laid an insufficient emphasis. 'He is well endowed,' says Mr. Everard, with strength, 'especially in the wrist.' This is but a niggard tribute to the immense physical power with which Mr. Blackwell is gifted. Standing above six foot in height, his physique shows the very perfection of strength. Not only is he well endowed, but his strength is something altogether out of the common; and it is strength of that special quality that is capable of being exerted in rapid movement. It is doubtless this union of activity and power, combined with the 'ideal orthodoxy' of his style, that gives him his tremendous length of drive. These gifts of muscle are his by birthright; no course of study can impart them to those less gifted. But what

Mr. Edward Blackwell, at Top of Swing.

may repay some study and turn to the advantage of feebler folk, are the details, so far as our portraits have succeeded in reproducing them, of his ideal swing.

Possibly the first feature that arrests attention when we regard the first illustration 'at the top of the swing' is the unusual height to which the right elbow is raised. It appears a little above the knuckles of the right hand even—considerably higher, therefore, than the right wrist, whose bend makes it invisible from the present point of view. This high raising of the right elbow was a feature of the style of an older school. We reproduce elsewhere a picture of a medal taken from an old die that shows this feature almost in exaggeration. Probably it is an aid to that flattening of the arc of the swing which is insisted upon as an essential by all didactic writers on golf. A second point for notice is that the club is scarcely at all below the horizontal behind the back. Yet one watching Mr. Blackwell play would certainly not speak of his swing as a short one. The great flat length of the arc gives the impression that the swing is a long one, but it is long in the flat length of its arc, not in any wasted wandering behind the back; and this although Mr. Blackwell, with all his power, is lissome enough, and might swing low behind the back with less risk of losing accuracy than most of us. The club handle, it is seen, has been let turn freely in the grip of the right hand, and lies home against the web between thumb and first finger. The left shoulder is allowed to come round freely, well under the head, which is steady, to allow the eye to rest fixed on the ball. The left heel has come easily away off the ground, to allow the turn of the body at the hips, and the weight is wholly thrown on the right leg. The ball is rather far back, towards the striker's right, but the right foot itself appears somewhat drawn back, the left being slightly in advance of a line drawn from the right toe parallel to the line of the ball's flight.

All these are points well worthy of our notice—worthy, I

almost venture to think, of our imitation. And at this early stage in this chapter let me say that the purpose we had in view in giving these illustrations and these comments was twofold. We believe that they may have an interest as showing how good players play well, emphasising what seem to be the special merits of their styles, and also that they may serve by way of an ensample to other men, yet an ensample that should be followed with prudence and in moderation. For when a man has acquired for himself a style which serves him tolerably, it is not to be supposed that he is going to improve it by setting himself to work to copy, bit by bit, the excellences of another man to the upsetting of his own. It is only when he finds that style of his own temporarily upset, without any such tampering with it, by the aberrations that golfing nature is heir to—then he may perhaps refer to this portrait gallery with profit, may see what this or that man—whose *forte* is that particular stroke in which he is himself for the time being deficient—can show him as to the way in which success is arrived at, and so, almost insensibly, by keeping this picture in his mental vision, may modify his own style in this particular until he has found again the secret he has lost. Of course the great secret is confidence, and this is the secret that no maxims and no pictures can impart. The great imparter of confidence is success. But what pictures can teach is the style in which success is most likely to be achieved, and with the achievement of success will come the confidence. That, at least, is our modest hope, and we think it will not be disappointed.

I hope, too, that no one will criticise this chapter too severely if there appear to be occasional contradictions in it. There is such a thing as an 'ideal orthodoxy' of style, but there are points in certain men's styles which are commendable, even though they are sometimes arrived at by the sacrifice of orthodoxy. J. H. Taylor, for example,

MR. EDWARD BLACKWELL, AT FINISH OF DRIVE.

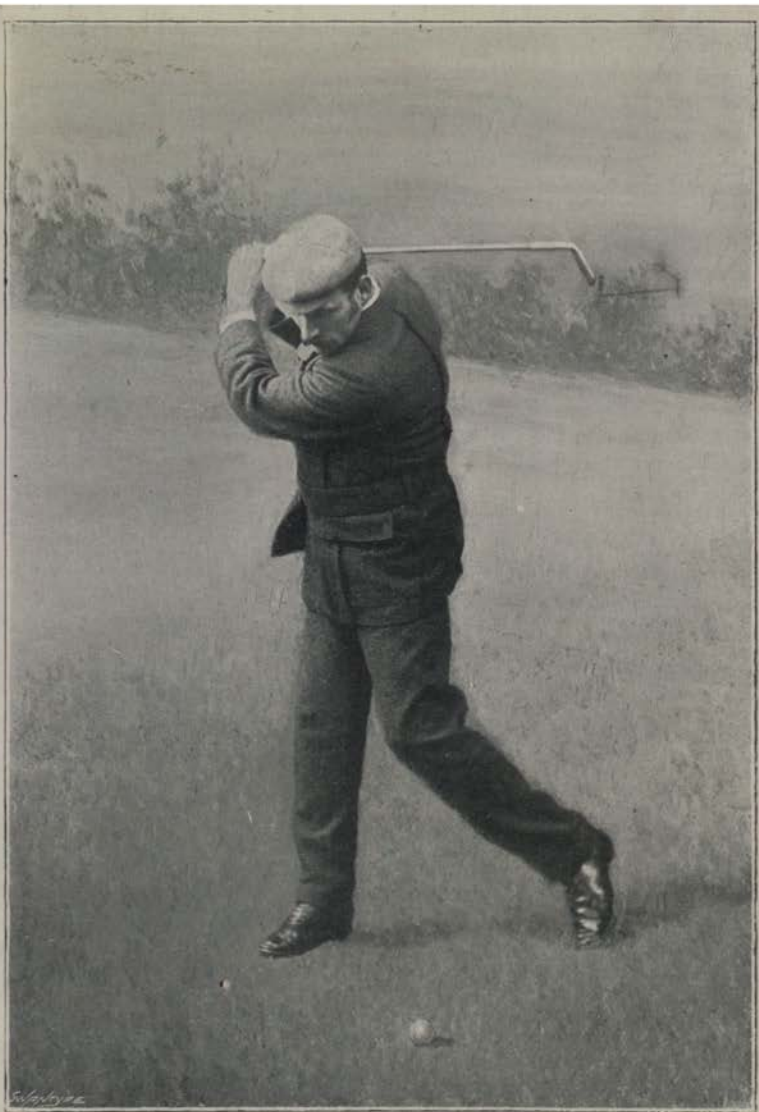
plays all his strokes after the fashion that is only orthodox for approach strokes. We believe this to be the secret of his wonderful straightness when in form; but that is not to say that all the world would do well, or would achieve his straightness or any of his success, by sacrificing the orthodox way of driving and imitating his manner. Also we shall praise now this quality and now that—now Herd's 'compactness' of style and now poor young Hugh Kirkaldy's slashing freedom. All have their merits and their lessons for the golfer who now errs because he swings too loosely, or again because he swings too crampedly. We correct vices by noticing the opposite virtues in their extreme degrees. So our progress may be like that of a donkey going uphill with a load (will the golfer forgive the comparison?) now this way, and now that, often zigzag, but still, on the whole, constantly upwards. And now let us return to Mr. Edward Blackwell, whom we have left up at the top of his swing for an unconscionably long time.

He does not pause there, but brings the club quickly down again—at an amazing speed, indeed, and with an amazing force, which we cannot imitate, but describing a long flat arc that we can describe just as well as he. And look at him after the stroke has been delivered, and the ball has gone ever so far away. Can we not swear, without having seen that stroke, that the arms have gone right away from the body after it, following up the ball as far as they could persuade the club to go in the direction of its flight and carrying the force of the body well into the blow? The right shoulder has now come well round, instead of the left, the weight has all been thrown on the left leg as it came forward on to the ball, and the right heel, instead of the left, has now been let come well away from the ground to let the body turn and assist in the general purposes of that follow-on. There is no more to say about it; it is the 'ideal orthodoxy' of the swing.

W. PARK

The name of 'Willie Park' has been one to conjure with in golfing circles for generations, for the present grand player is not the first of his famous golfing family to bear his Christian name. 'Old Willie' Park was one of the greatest golfers in the days of the elder Dunn, of Alan Robertson, and of 'Old Tom' Morris before he became 'Old Tom.' It is a name to make the echoes of famous matches played long ago ring out again, but, what is more immediately interesting, it is the name of one who has twice been open champion, and is perfectly ready to be open champion again. He has combined in a very unusual degree success in playing the game and success as a club and ball maker in an extensive line of business. Commencing with his shop at Musselburgh, he has pushed his successful enterprise into the heart of the city of London and carried it across the sea to America, where he has established flourishing branches. It is just a little wonderful to see a man who has such extensive business projects in his head able to clear his brain of such cobwebs, and concentrate all his attention on the playing of a game which seems to demand more absolute concentration than any other. To say that Park is able to do this is to pay a great tribute to his coolness, easiness, and control of temper. And these characteristics are the more worth noting for our present purpose, which is to show the special idiosyncrasies and excellences of a number of fine players, because they are characteristics that are reflected not only, as it seems to me, in his perfect and equable temper when playing the game, but also in the very methods and qualities of his swing.

It has been said of him before, 'he makes the game look very easy.' He goes about the whole business so quietly, addresses himself to the ball so unostentatiously, and plays each stroke with so easy and unhurried a swing, that he



W. Park, at Top of Swing for Full Cleek Shot.

seems as if the whole matter was no effort to him, that it all went easily—just as he seems to make his business affairs run smoothly and to be in a perfectly satisfied humour, even though the match be going against him.

It seems as if we can even see these qualities exhibited in the illustrations that show Park in the act of playing a full cleek stroke. This stroke in particular was selected for illustrating the qualities of his swing because it is the common idea that even if a smooth even swing be the ideal for a full stroke with the driving clubs, something rather more than this—a little forcing, a little hard-hitting—is not only admissible, but even desirable, in playing a full shot with an iron club. Yet Park plays a very long cleek shot, and he plays it with that perfect ease and smoothness that characterises his use of all his clubs. Something of this easy smoothness is to be attributed to Park's physical make. A tall, lissom, and yet powerful man, he looks like one of those who would possess a peculiarly long swing—who would bring the club very far down behind his back. And yet we do not find him swinging in this manner. His swing is long, but it is long in the best sense, not in the sense of the useless reaching down far behind the back. It is long in the sense that the club-head describes a low flat arc as it comes away from the ball, and again repeats this arc as it comes to meet the ball, following it on with a regular continuation of its course after the ball is struck. We see in these illustrations that at the top of the swing the cleek has scarcely attained the horizontal line behind the head, the body has made a turn at the hips, but not so great a turn as the free bend of the left knee and the lifting of the heel right off the ground would seem to permit. But it is part of the character of Park's swing to keep all its movements within easy control, and he has not gone to the full length of turn on the hips that he might have reached. Another point to notice is the grip—so delicate that the term almost seems misapplied—not of the left hand, but of the left fingers. It is in the fingers only that the

club seems to be held. The left shoulder has come fairly far round, but not remarkably far.

In the second illustration—that which shows the finish of the stroke—there is more abandon. But this is only of a piece with the rest: the club, the arms, the right shoulder, the turn of the body, the slight bending of the right knee, the lift of the right heel, have all been allowed to play their full part in the follow-on. But they have played their part rather as following the natural direction of travel of the club's head when the ball was struck than as forcibly emphasising the speed of its travel. The club at the finish of the stroke is down below the horizontal line, behind the head—a deal lower than at the top of the swing. And again the fingers of the left hand are seen still with their light grip of the club shaft.

All this goes to make up an ideal of an easy swing. We have quoted another player as one whose swing was ideally easy—this was Harry Vardon. Yet his easy smoothness of style is different from that of Park, differing according to the differences in the physical build of the two men. Park is a long, loose-jointed man. Vardon is more compact. More compact, too, is Vardon's method of swing. The fault of Park's swing, regarded as an ideal of instructiveness for the average golfer (regarded as the best possible series of muscular arrangements for his individual build and temperament, it would be presumptuous to find a fault with it), is that it appears to lack compactness, to be a trifle too loose. This is almost the same as saying that Park's build is not that of the average man; he is taller, longer-limbed, less tightly jointed than the average, and all these idiosyncrasies have gone into the formation of his graceful swing. We should hardly say that it was a swing that every man should strive to model his own on. For a man of Park's build it might do, and for a man also of Park's temperament.

The last observation may seem in the nature of a subtlety,

W. Park, at Finish of Cleek Shot.

but we believe that there is a special danger in the cultivation of these extremely easy swings. A man has need to be exceptionally cool and controlled to continue striking at the ball thus easily when a match is at its crisis. Of more than one player we have heard it said that 'he changes his style when he is collared.' The tendency when 'collared,' or even when hard pressed, is to put a little more muscular effort into the stroke, and this little extra effort is not nearly so apt to have a disturbing influence on a compact swing as on a very easy one. That at least is the writer's own view, and probably, on reflection, it will be shared by a good many. For a man to whom this extremely easy style comes naturally it would be a folly verging on a crime to attempt to alter it. Let him cherish it as his most precious possession. But for a man to cultivate such an ease of swing artificially, an ease that does not perfectly accord with his temperament and the formation of his muscle, would surely be to court inaccuracy in the hour of his greatest need of accuracy.

On the other hand, the commoner tendency is to go to the opposite extreme—to hurry the swing with forceful, jerky movements—and for a man who feels himself afflicted with this most frequently besetting sin a study, and a degree of imitation, of Park's charmingly graceful style cannot fail to be useful. We get on, as we have said, zigzag, like a donkey going uphill, and when we have fallen into one extreme it is well to try to correct it by a study of its opposite.

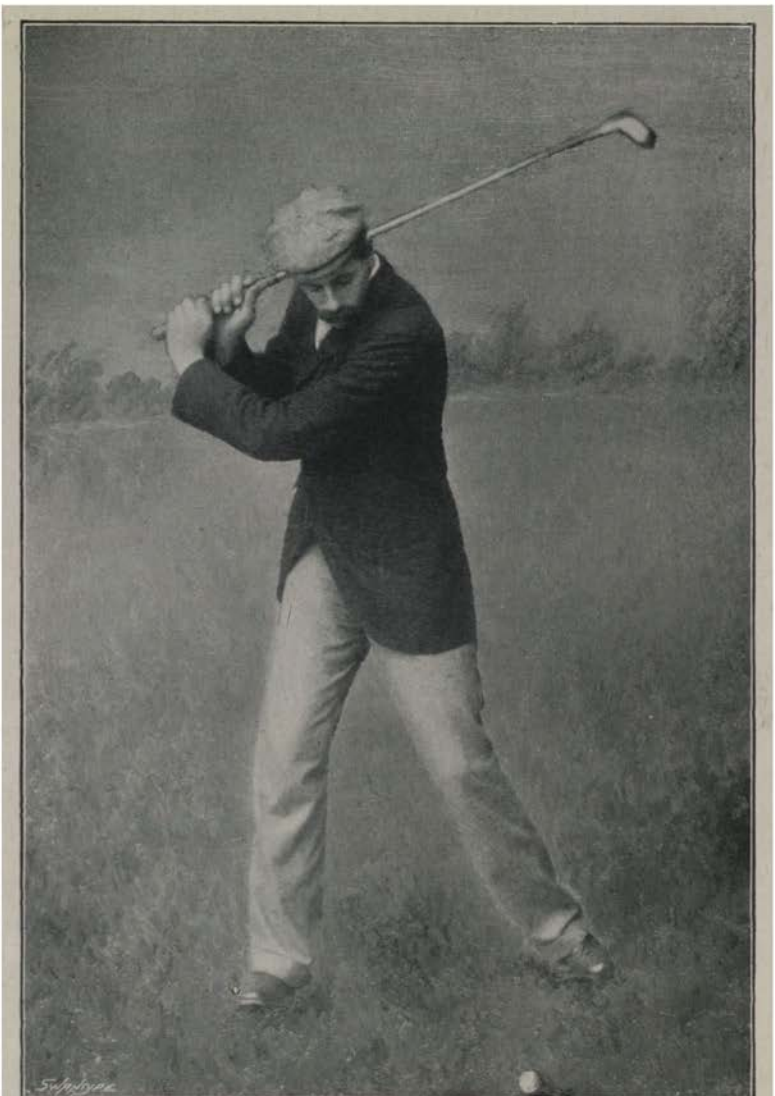
Park, with all his quiet coolness and smooth swing, has proved himself essentially a plucky match-player. He is a most gallant challenger, and it seems only necessary for one or other of the professionals to show himself a little better than any of his fellows for Park to engage him in a money match. Thus he took on Andrew Kirkaldy, but the latter brave match player beat him. Again he challenged Rolland when Rolland was generally considered the best of the bunch, and again was beaten, though both Kirkaldy

and Rolland were hard put to it to gain the advantage. Nothing daunted, as soon as Taylor had proved his powers by winning two successive championships, nothing would satisfy Park but he must be at him, and this time he gained a well-deserved victory after the closest of fights. Even at the moment of writing he is doing great things—breaking records at North Berwick. In America, too, where he has played several matches in intervals of his business pursuits, he has shown splendid form.

Also he has written a book of instructions for the tiro at golf—one of the many, and one of the best. I have not very lately read the book, but I remember two points that struck me specially. He speaks, as many speak, of the value of a good 'follow-on.' We have seen that his own style gives a fine object-lesson on the point. But he tells us that his own forbear, the famous Willie Park of a bygone day, used to carry the follow-on to such an extreme as actually to go a pace or two after the ball after striking it. This is to follow-on with a vengeance indeed.

A second point that has perhaps more practical bearing concerns the delicate matter of putting, and Park excels on the putting green. As every golfer knows, it often happens that the 'line of the putt' looks different when viewed from hole to ball, from what it appeared when studied from ball to hole. In case of such difference, Park tells us that he makes it his own invariable rule to putt on the line that seemed correct when viewed from hole to ball; and surely his own putting is the highest justification of his method.

It was but by a stroke—by a single stroke and by a single man—that he was beaten at Prestwick for the championship of 1898–9. On the first day he held a lead of three strokes; but Vardon gradually overhauled him, played a grand final round of seventy-six against his sterling good seventy-nine, and finished a stroke ahead. Just previously Park had challenged any man in the world to play him a home and home match for 100*l.* a side; a challenge that



JAMES BRAID, AT TOP OF SWING.

Willie Fernie promptly accepted, but only to find himself defeated by the heavy balance of thirteen up and twelve to play on seventy-two holes. But both in this match that Park so finely won, and in the championship that he so narrowly lost, the play was far and away above the average of first-class golf.

At the moment of writing Park has a challenge outstanding to play any golfer in the world on four links for 100*l.* a side, each player to select two greens. Up to the present no one has cared to accept that proffered chance of making money.

J. BRAID

The name of Braid leads us back at once, by association, to those pleasant places on the north shore of the Firth of Forth, Leven and Elie—conterminous links on which Braid, Rolland, the Simpsons, and a host of other brave men and good golfers learned most of what they know about the game. Braid and Rolland are first cousins, and there is a family likeness in their game. The last professional match I saw happened to finish in a tie between these two cousins; but Rolland is not quite the player he was, and Braid would generally be in front of him now in a scoring competition, for Braid is just at the tiptop of his form. After he ran second to Mr. Hilton in the open championship meeting of 1897 he met with few checks that year, and was first in a good many competitions in which all the best talent was against him.

'Jimmy' Braid is a strong character now, as well as a strong player and a mighty strong driver among the professional class. It is curious how his merit has brought him out on top. A few years ago we knew nothing of him except a rumour that there was a very fine player of his name engaged club-making for the Army and Navy Stores. Then he halved an exhibition match at West Drayton with

Taylor, then champion; and from that beginning he went steadily on, playing matches with constantly growing success, accepting the engagement of professional to the Romford Club, then losing the championship by an ace only, and more than keeping up the reputation thus won in the course of the months that have passed since.

The Elie green is not a long one. Leven is longer, but not remarkably long. Yet together they seem to have the knack of turning out some tremendously long drivers. The Simpsons are not 'a feeble folk,' Rolland's name was a terror a few years ago, and Braid is scarcely behind him in length of drive. His carry is certainly not equal to Rolland's at his best, but I think his ball has more run. In any case he drives quite far enough. Of course both he and Rolland are unusually strong men, and we do not find unusual length of driving without unusual strength. This is a statement that will be contradicted, but it shall stand.

Braid's is not altogether an attractive style to watch. Sound it certainly must be, or it could not execute its results; but one would not call it orthodox. A point to be noticed in the first illustration which he gives to our portrait gallery is the comparative shortness of the swing, computed by the position of the club when at its highest. It is apparent that it does not nearly reach the horizontal behind the back—scarcely is it allowed to make more than an angle of 45° behind the back. We reckon this as not enough for orthodoxy; perhaps we may regard the horizontal as about the proper standard of the classic style; it is to the horizontal that Mr. Edward Blackwell—Mr. Everard's *beau idéal*—approximates. Again there is a difference—and I think we see in this the reason that Braid's club does not go further back—in the grip of the right hand with Mr. Blackwell and with Braid respectively. In Braid's case the club has evidently been held firmly in the right hand throughout the upward swing, and will, we may assume, be so held, no less firmly, throughout the downward swing.

JAMES BRAID, AT FINISH OF DRIVE.

The club handle has not been allowed to shift at all in the grip of the fingers. Now if you drop the book, and take up a club for a moment, you will find, I think, that, holding the club thus firmly, rigidly, and without movement, and especially if you keep the right elbow down, as Braid keeps it, it becomes very difficult to swing the club any further round behind the head than he gets it. Whereas in Mr. Blackwell's case not only has the right elbow come very high up, but the grip of the right hand has evidently been relaxed to let the club, while still controlled by the fingers, go back against the web between the forefinger and the thumb. It is this permission given the club to turn thus freely in the right hand (which is not to be taken as meaning that the right hand does not still maintain a perfect control of it and keep in perfect touch with it) that gives, if we may venture on such a positive assertion, the greater freedom to the stroke of Mr. Blackwell. Braid looks a trifle tied; as if certain bits of his anatomy were saying to him, 'you cannot get back any further.' Braid's fully sufficient answer is: 'I do not want to.' That is all Braid has to say, and to point to his next drive by way of clinching the argument; but that is not to say that none of us need want to go back further, or that we should arrange our own anatomical adjustments exactly on the same lines. And possibly even for Braid it would not do to go back only thus far and no farther, but that there are certain other qualities of unusual value in his swing, by way of compensation. For them we have to look, I think, at the second illustration; but before leaving the first let us pause a moment to notice the position of the ball—unusually near the left foot, unusually far forward. It is a significant fact that all the longest drivers—and in making such a general statement one lays oneself open to instant refutation—play with the ball well forward. Braid, Rolland, Toogood, and, in slightly less measure, Mr. Blackwell are instances. And now for Braid's forward swing.

If he has rather less than most behind the ball, it is certain that he has a deal more than most before the ball. After the ball is hit he seems to be putting his greatest force into hitting it; and this is probably the main secret of his length of drive. The attitude in which he is shown after the stroke, facing right towards the line of flight of the ball, shows how freely he has let his body follow on with the stroke. His right leg seems left right away behind him; in his upward swing, even with his short back stroke, the weight of the body had come on the right leg, but now the body is right away forward on the left leg. The right shoulder has come round fairly far, but the most noticeable point about the swing is the manner in which the body with the arms and the club have been let come right away through—almost too much so, to say the truth, for grace. Braid's stroke is not altogether a graceful one—he will forgive us we hope, for the criticism—but its terrific power is absolutely undeniable. No player that we are acquainted with is able to indulge himself so safely in the generally dangerous luxury of pressing. He seems to press hard with every drive he makes; but the true meaning of this is that he is in such perfect training of eye and muscle that he is able to concentrate all his force on the stroke in a degree that it would be impossible for any man in less perfect training of eye and muscle to combine with a sufficient degree of accuracy. The great feature of his style is his power of keeping such tremendous force under such perfect control.

Therefore, in spite of its lack of grace, and partly by reason of its lack of grace, it is a peculiarly fascinating style to watch. This sounds a paradox; but there is a special delight in seeing the kind of divine fury with which he 'laces into' the ball, and yet the wonderful accuracy with which the club meets the ball. He is a fine player to watch.

But it would be very unfair on Braid to write of him as if he were merely a tremendous driver. He is this, but he

Mr. Mure Fergusson, at Top of Swing.

is a deal more too. If there is a lack of apparent finish about his driving style, there is none in his manner of handling his iron clubs. He is very powerful with them at long range, and his manner of using them is less forcing than his driving work. He is a finished approacher. Now and again his putting is weak, but that is only to say that he is mortal. If his game had no weak spot it would be no longer golf, and it is only at times that even his putting fails him. The greens at Romford—very true, but very flat—are not a very good education for putting all round the countryside, as at Epsom and at Ashdown Forest, where we have seen Braid sadly at a loss on the severely sloping greens. On the other hand, it is only fair to say that good putting was in the greatest request at Hoylake when Braid was runner-up for the championship, for the course was so hard baked that unless a man had the touch of his putter most subtly true he could not hope for even a decent score.

The feature of Braid's style, then, as shown in the portraits, is the excellent manner in which he follows on after the club and ball meet. It is in what there is 'after the ball,' as the phrase goes, rather than before it, that his swing is worthy of our imitation and pious meditation.

Mr. MURE FERGUSSON

No golfer's style seems to owe less to imitation and to have more individuality than that of Mr. Mure Fergusson. He was trained in the most classical of schools, on the Royal and Ancient links, but his swing does not seem to have any close resemblance to that of young Tom Morris, of Mr. Leslie Balfour Melville, or of any other of those who were contemporary with him there and whose methods he might have been likely to adopt. On none of them does his style seem modelled. It has worked out salvation for itself on its own

methods. There is one point, however, that we may notice in which it is like Mr. Balfour Melville's swing—both players at the top of the swing have their hands unusually high lifted away from the head and shoulder. In Mr. Mure Fergusson's case this characteristic of keeping the hands so well away from the body is carried out at the finish of the stroke almost to an extreme. It is a point well worthy of attentive notice. One of the commonplaces of instruction in the execution of the golfing swing is that the arc described by the club-head shall be large and flat. The way to arrive at this result, as commonly shown to the tiro, is to keep the arms at full stretch as long as conveniently may be while the club is being raised, and again to bring the arms to their full stretch as soon as possible in course of the downward stroke. This is the method commonly inculcated. But it appears at once that where the hands are so high above the shoulder at the top of the swing, and again so high and far away from the body at its finish, it is possible to execute the swing practically without bringing the hands near the body at all, and the result of this surely cannot fail to be that the arc is large and flat. It is not necessary to argue this out with figures and diagrams; a more convincing and more pleasant way is to take a club and try it.

So this is a point in Mr. Fergusson's swing that is well worth study, and may help to correct our sinful original tendencies to contract the swing and do it all close round our wretched bodies. And secondly, his actual body swing is worth looking at. If it is by this straightening, and keeping straight, of the arms that he gets the right direction of travel for the club-head, it is without a doubt by his fine body swing that he gets the power into his shots. For Mr. Fergusson is a driver of very great power when he is in form. Like all the rest, he is not always in form, but when he is there are exceedingly few that will out-drive him. His ball has a long carry, and when it touches the ground it is not yet done with but has a long run in reserve to help it.

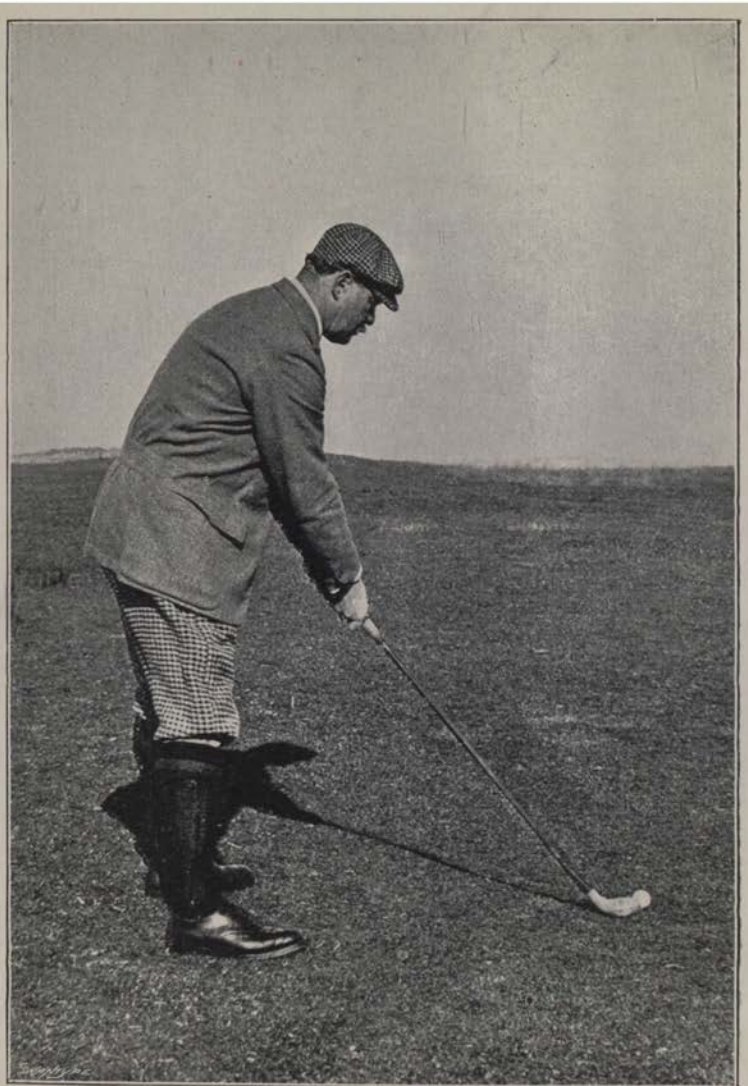
MR. MURE FERGUSSON, AT FINISH OF DRIVE.

Nobody gets the body swing more freely, and the turn on the hips longer, than Mr. Fergusson. In the position that shows him at the top of the swing his shoulders are not only at a half-left, but almost at a three-quarter-left, turn away from the ball; while after the swing is finished the shoulders are again facing, not at a half-right, but a three-quarter-right turn from where the ball has been. This very free turn on the hips Mr. Fergusson achieves at the top of the swing without *very* much lifting of the left heel from the ground, but, on the other hand, after the ball has gone, and when he is following on after it, he helps the turn of the body by letting the right heel come extraordinarily far away from the ground, and round. This body-turn of Mr. Fergusson's is only a little less worthy of study—and, in some cases, of imitation—than his outstretched arms. It is in moderation, and with a sense of the fitness of things, that this imitation is to be practised, for the man whose natural swing is stiff, close, and cramped will find himself considerably at sea if he strives all at once to copy the qualities of Mr. Fergusson's style. For him it should be taken to indicate only the direction in which he has to aim, not the mould in which he has to form himself. And generally, in pointing out all the various excellences that this gallery of golfing talent must exhibit, it is to be understood that praise does not necessarily imply that it is good for all men to strive to emulate the particular point chosen for praise. It may be that one feature of the swing, good in itself, is carried to an exaggeration in order, unconsciously it may be, to counteract an error or a weakness in another part of the swing; but as a rule the points to study are those wherein we find ourselves the weakest.

The picture showing Mr. Fergusson in the act of addressing the ball, preparatory to the actual swing, shows a peculiarity of his style that we would not suggest for any one's imitation. It suits Mr. Fergusson, and that is the best one can say for it, and doubtless if he were to vary it now it would

disturb the accuracy of his stroke; but, at the same time, we may say that he is a fine player rather in spite than by reason of the peculiarity. It will be seen that the club-head has only the extreme tip of its toe applied to the ball, so that when the club-head comes down in the act of hitting the ball it will need to be advanced a little away from the striker's body, if the ball is to be hit truly with the centre. One or two good players share this peculiarity with Mr. Fergusson, but it is a point that we would note rather as a curiosity than as worthy of imitation, and are by no means sure that it is an unvarying practice with him.

Mr. Fergusson has done many fine things in his golfing career; notably he has played for the medals of the Royal and Ancient club with repeated and conspicuous success, and has won medals on many an English course besides. But perhaps the best of all his performances was his winning his way into the final heat of the amateur championship on both the last occasions that it has been held at Hoylake. Some years ago he made a very tight match of it with Mr. John Ball in the final tie. In the semi-final tie Mr. Fergusson had beaten Mr. F. G. Tait, and in the final the close finish was the more creditable to him because Mr. Ball went away with a strong lead at the start. The crowd was immense, and seemed to bother the players a little. Mr. Fergusson, not the least discouraged by his position, played very steadily and wore off hole after hole of Mr. Ball's lead until he had him all square with two to play. Both made good tee shots to the seventeenth (speaking of the old course, when the finish was in front of the Royal Hotel), and Mr. Ball's second shot to that hole won the match. Mr. Fergusson had played the odd short of the bunker. Mr. Ball, after a moment's deliberation, took his brassy, hit one of his characteristic shots—low, and rising towards the finish, with a slight hook. It carried the bunker with some yards to spare, and virtually it was this shot that won him the championship. Mr. Ball asked me afterwards whether I thought he had been right in 'going



Mr. Mure Fergusson, Addressing for Drive.

for it.' 'Certainly,' I said, 'if you felt like doing it.' One should always obey the voice of the demon that gives us this kind of inspiration. So if it was only by a *tour de force* of this kind that Mr. Fergusson could be beaten for the championship, it is almost as much as if he had taken champion rank. He has always shown himself one of the pluckiest of players. On a medal day you will scarcely ever see him short with a putt, and he loves a good wet green, so that he may give the ball a chance. As a rule he putts with a lofted cleek, and all his shots, from his full drive to his putts, are played with very much the same stance and grip of the club. This is a point that perhaps a good many of us would do well to attend to, for it tends to simplify the game. There cannot be any merit in the multiplication of attitudes if one will serve equally well for all. A great stroke of Mr. Fergusson's is pushing the ball up to the hole, from a long distance, with a driving mashie. It is a most useful stroke on a windy day, keeping the ball straight and low. It is to the energy and ability of Mr. Mure Fergusson's management that the New Zealand Golf Club at Byfleet, where the course was made out of a pine forest, owes much of its success and popularity.

On the second occasion of Mr. Fergusson's finding himself in the final tie for the championship Mr. F. G. Tait was his opponent, and beat him with what looks like considerable ease by seven up and five to play on the thirty-six holes by which the final heat in this championship is now decided. But the ease was not so great as this balance seems to imply, for not only was every hole well contested, but Mr. Tait had to save himself now and again by some of those recoveries for which he is famous. In the semi-final tie Mr. Fergusson had beaten Mr. Robb very gallantly, by a single hole, after being down all through the match, and one down with only two to play.

Again in the competition for the St. George's Vase at Sandwich it was really only by what was something very like

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a slice of luck that Mr. Tait headed Mr. Fergusson's score by a single stroke. The two played together—neck and neck all the way—and at the last hole Mr. Tait was fifteen yards from the hole, Mr. Fergusson to all appearance dead. But Mr. Tait holed, Mr. Fergusson missed, and the result was, yet again, victory for Mr. Tait.

Mr. J. E. LAIDLAY

It is just a little difficult to 'place' Mr. Laidlay in a portrait gallery of eminent players designed to afford us an ensample of the manner in which their eminence has been achieved. Mr. Laidlay's eminence is beyond all question; he has twice won the amateur championship, has gained medals in the very best of company almost beyond computation. There was a time when the suffrages of the golfing world would probably have elected him, by a large majority, the best amateur player in Scotland; and though he can no longer, perhaps, claim such special superiority, he still remains among the two or three who would probably be bracketed together at the top of the list. Of all the first-class golfers—of amateur class at all events, and I am by no means sure that even this reservation ought to be made—I think that Mr. Laidlay was the very best 'finisher,' the one who was most likely to lay a long second close up on the green of the last hole when the match was all even with one to play. His nerve was very good indeed, and made him very 'bad to beat' when the crisis of the match came. This, of course, is a moral, rather than a physical, quality, depending upon the individual temperament more than on any peculiar mode of swing or way of holding the hands; and therefore it is hardly to be imitated.

But certainly Mr. Laidlay's swing was a peculiar one; peculiar to himself, though he has had not a few imitators, but none of them have succeeded in justifying the methods

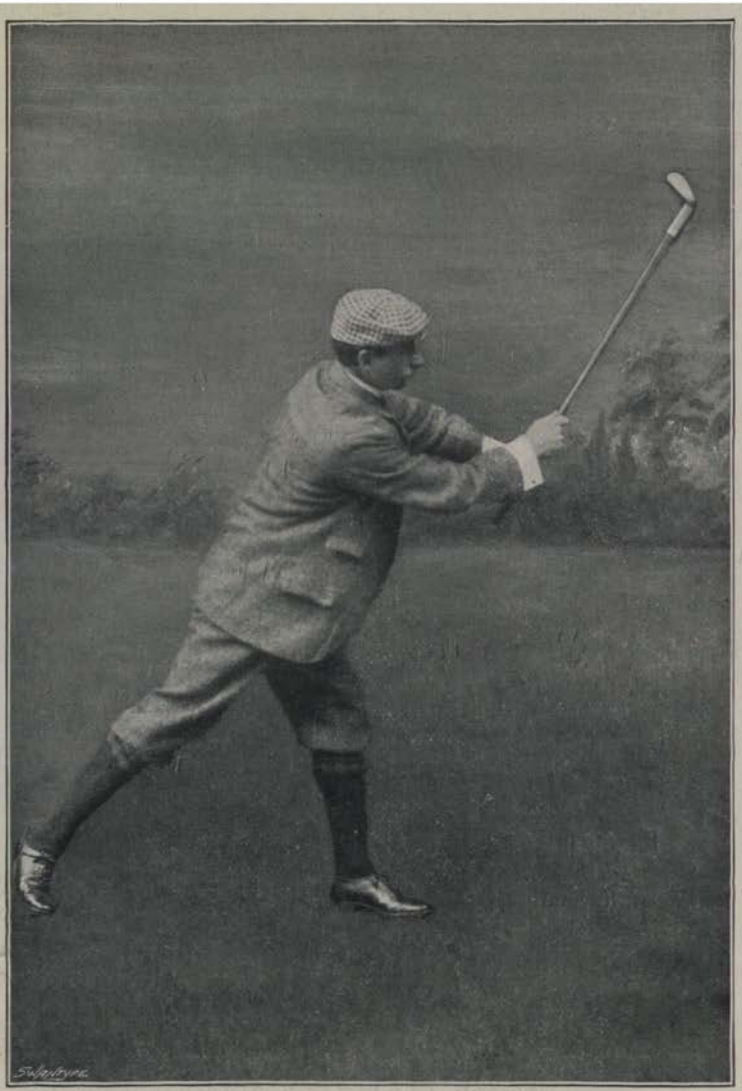
Mr. J. E. Laidlay, Addressing for Approach Stroke.

as Mr. Laidlay's consistent execution justified them. If Mr. Blackwell's style is the 'ideal of orthodoxy,' Mr. Laidlay's might be described as he 'ideal of heterodoxy,' and yet in golfing execution they stand almost on the same, the highest, level. Mr. Laidlay's style is indeed the despair of the golfing instructor. Its special peculiarity is that the swing is entirely 'off the left leg.' The ball, when Mr. Laidlay addresses it—whether with driver, approaching-club, or putter, and perhaps in this uniformity there is to be found some explanation of its success—is placed far to his left, very nearly, if not quite, opposite his left foot.

It is not needful to say of a player who has had so much success that his mastery over all his clubs is perfect when he is in form, but the great feature of his golf has always been his approaching. He learned his game in a school that put a peculiar value on the approach stroke, on that short course of North Berwick, before the days of its comparatively recent extension, when nearly all the holes were on greens so small and so beset by hazards that it was essential to pitch the ball right up to them and make it stop there, on alighting, as if a string were tied to it. It is this shot that Mr. Laidlay has brought to such perfection, and it is in the act of addressing himself to such a stroke that our first illustration shows him. Mr. Laidlay is one of those who believe most firmly in the principle of gripping all his clubs lightly, his mashie, for delicate approach strokes, and especially for lofting dead, peculiarly so. This is in marked contradiction to the opinion and the practice of Taylor, who grips his club very tightly in playing the approach, as he states in his able article included in this book, and yet, with that tight grip, drops the ball very dead indeed. Mr. Laidlay has told the writer that the more lightly he grips his clubs the better he plays, and the better he plays the more lightly he grips his clubs. With him light grip and good play go together, and the handles of all his clubs are, perhaps on this account, peculiarly thin.

But in all respects Mr. Laidlay is an abnormal player—abnormally good, for one thing, but also abnormal in all his methods. In this illustration, in which he is seen in position for the approach stroke, the ball is seen in its, with him, characteristic place, opposite the left foot. Most players, however they place the ball for the generality of strokes, have it far more nearly opposite the right foot than the left in playing the approach stroke. Generally, too, it is the right foot that is advanced. But Mr. Laidlay plays this approach stroke with the ball opposite his left foot, with his left foot advanced, and plays not only this but all his strokes in the same manner. There is something in the peculiar deadliness of approach that both possess that suggests a constant comparison of Mr. Laidlay and of Taylor, and it is a comparison that is very interesting. Mr. Laidlay plays all his strokes off the left leg, and is in fact perhaps the most one-legged player, so to say, of all—with the exception possibly of Taylor; but then Taylor is one-legged off the other leg, all his strokes are played off the right leg, and all are played in the manner that is considered strictly orthodox for the approach stroke, but for that only. Further, there is the other point of diametrical opposition that Mr. Laidlay grips very loosely, Taylor very tightly. Therefore the golfing student is left with a very considerable margin for choice between these two extremes.

Mr. Laidlay's delicacy of touch on the club is illustrated, I think, in the pictures before us by the manner in which he is *fingering* the club. He does not hold it in any coarse, brutal grasp of the palm of the hands; the thumbs and the fingers are sensitively gripping it, ready, we may suppose, to feel every subtle suggestion of difference in the manner of striking the ball. We like, too, the slight crook out of the left elbow. This we may assume to be a valuable aid to straight play, as it seems to ensure the straight follow-through of the club-head in the direction of the ball's flight. A moment's attention, with club in hand, passing it over a line



Mr. J. E. Laidlay, at Finish of Approach Stroke.

of the carpet in strokes at an imaginary ball, will make this very evident.

In looking at the second picture we see how extraordinarily Mr. Laidlay has carried out this principle of the follow-on. Many carry it out fully enough in the drive, but I do not know any one that carries the stroke so far forward in the half mashie shot. He seems to have come forward as if he had been shot out; and his right shoulder has gone astonishingly far round and to the front, considering the comparative shortness of the total swing. Mr. Laidlay is not a big man, but squarely built and muscular, and all his muscles in fine working order, as the result of an out-of-door life. The power of his long shots off a short half-swing with his iron clubs is very great; and this is more remarkable when one considers the light grip of the hands. It is evident that the power is obtained by perfect 'timing,' putting in the force at the right moment—that is to say, at the moment when the club-head is coming into contact with the ball. Mr. Laidlay is himself very conscious of the need of accurate timing—perhaps more so than most golfers—and I have heard him often explain a bad shot by saying that he had timed it ill. There seems to be something very attractive in his theory and practice of playing all the strokes—that light grip and that strict attention to timing the stroke properly seem parts of a prettier game than that forceful play with the tight wrists and tight muscles of hands and arms. In practice the difference is not so apparent, but in theory it sounds a more delicate game.

There was a time—his schoolboy days at Loretto—when Mr. Laidlay was just about the best slow bowler in Scotland, so it is evident that he has exceptional gifts for those games in which hand and eye and a sense of psychological moment work together. He has given cricket up, but is still a good man in a boat—a sea-going boat, not an out-rigger—and an excellent photographer. No doubt he has other excellences, but they are not so much concerned with hand and eye.

Mr. Laidlay's game deserves a special mention as to its putting. He putts, as he does everything, off the left leg, with a very short grip of the putter, and what is more astonishing than the method is its success. When in form—for Mr. Laidlay is rather apt, perhaps because of his curious style, to go off his game—he is a remarkably good putter; and this putting business, too, he does with that very light grip and with a slightly lofted cleek. If a man can get into this sort of club for the putting, there is no doubt that it gives him a little advantage over one who putts with the ordinary straight-faced putter. I may instance another player, not so famous as Mr. Laidlay, Mr. Dunsford, who plays at Westward Ho! chiefly, and who putts very much better than the average first-class player, with a medium iron. He, too, grips the club very low down, but there is more loft on his putts than Mr. Laidlay puts on with his less lofted cleek. The merit of the slightly lofted club for putting becomes apparent when the first few yards of the putting line are broken and rough. The loft on the club enables the player to continue to use his ordinary putting weapon, and yet put enough carry on the ball to pitch it over the broken ground and allow it to run on over the smooth. On the other hand, the difficulty of putting with these lofted clubs is that to most players it is harder to gauge the strength accurately when the ball is lofted at all, than when it is run along the ground all the way. Once overcome that difficulty, and you have more resource in your lofted club than those who play with the dead straight-faced ones.

One of Mr. Laidlay's most singular fancies used to be that he could play better with a new brassy than with one that was familiar to him. Elsewhere I have noted this idiosyncrasy, and the fact that few would find the principle suit them. But it suited Mr. Laidlay, as many have found to their cost. He would go into Forgan's or Tom's shop, and came out with a brand-new club that he had never seen before, and play all his second shots with it, all the way

through the game, just as if, as Mr. Andrew Lang says, he had been 'teethed on it.'

Altogether, Mr. Laidlay's is a golfing portrait of very exceptional features. Violating most of the orthodox rules, he produced a game that rivals, and often beats, that of all the orthodoxies; but whatever the idiosyncrasies of the style I am inclined to think that neither its strong points nor its weaknesses were the factors of his success, so much as that wonderfully steadfast nerve by virtue of which he could 'play up to a score,' or bring out his best performance just at the very finish and crisis of a match. A fine golfer, in spite of his 'ideal heterodoxy' of style; but a fine golfer, by reason of his ideal orthodoxy of temperament.

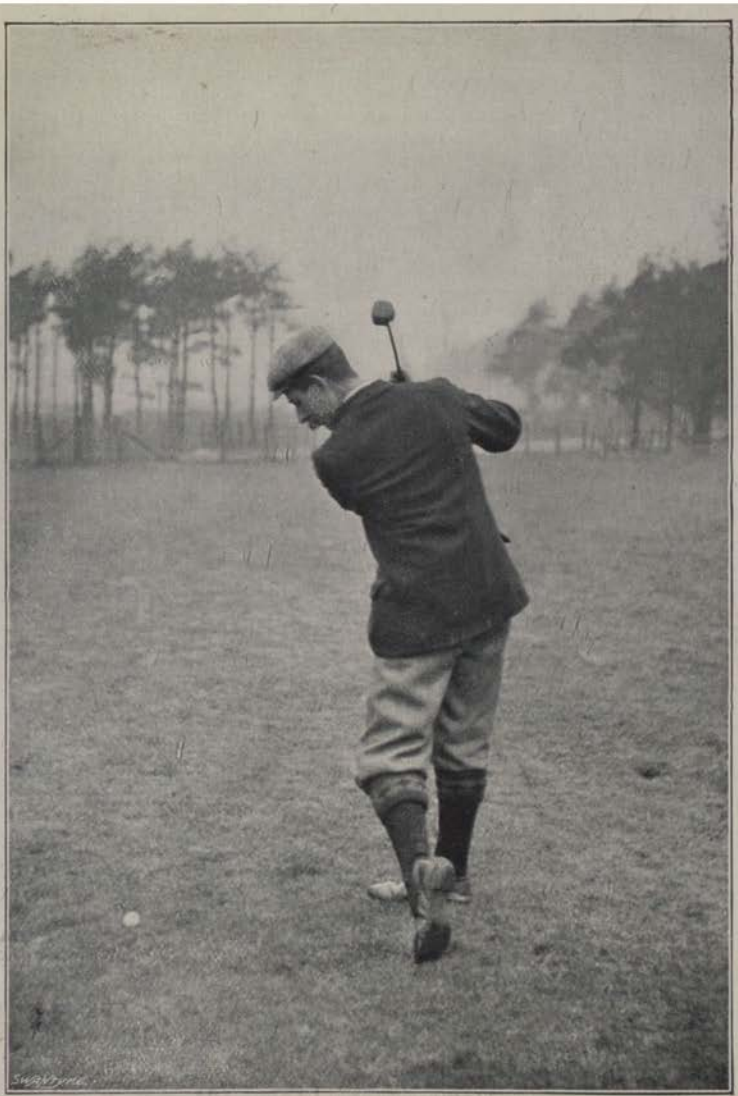
Lately he has shown a striking return to the power and accuracy of his best days. A few weeks before the amateur championship tournament of 1898 he was in remarkably good form, winning the Honourable Company's medal with great ease against a powerful field, and holding his own, and just a little more than his own, in three-ball matches with Andrew Kirkaldy and Herd. And then most unfortunately he had an attack—as slight as any attack of so malignant an evil thing can be—of typhoid fever, which prostrated him during all the great events—the Royal and Ancient Club's meeting and both the championships—of the spring.

H. VARDON

Harry Vardon is the first man, so far as I am aware, and hitherto the only man, not British born who has won the open championship. We cannot give up all claim to him and announce him as not a true Briton—he is far too good a golfer and too good a fellow for that—but he was not born and bred in Great Britain or in Ireland, but in the Channel Island of Jersey, where he learned to play a remarkably good game of golf. I am not sure that before he won his

first championship most of the golfing world was not disposed to put his brother, Tom, a little before him as a golfer; but Taylor, at all events, knew even then whom he had to fear—Taylor, who had held the championship twice successively at that time. He said that Harry Vardon was the only man of all the field that he feared, and this was not 'after the event wisdom,' but a confession of faith made before the fight began. The circumstances of Harry Vardon's first win were rather sensational. Taylor had won two years before at Sandwich, and again the year before at St. Andrews; the result of the third year's play, at Muirfield, was that Taylor and Vardon came out equal first. They had to decide the matter by playing another thirty-six holes, and there are two ways of looking at the conditions of the contest. It is possible to picture Vardon oppressed by the fame of Taylor's previous exploits: 'What chance had he against a man who had twice won the championship, and tied for it on the third successive occasion?' This was one way of looking at it. The other was to reflect: 'Well, I have done right well in even halving with such a player; if I get beaten now I shall still have earned a deal of credit, if I win I get more credit still. I have all to win and nothing to lose.'

Whichever way Harry Vardon argued it out to himself, no golf could have borne the impress of more cool self-confidence than the game he showed in playing off for the great prize. Taylor played well—considering that he had so much to lose and comparatively so little to win in the way of reputation, remarkably well. But Vardon played better, especially he putted better. And even after Taylor had pulled off a considerable lead that Vardon had gained early in the game, the latter still did not allow himself to be flustered even by this troublesome state of affairs. He kept on the even tenor of his way, and won the match. The manner in which he won the match, the perfect coolness, the perfect absence of swagger, yet the perfect possession of confidence, these are very typical of the player and of his



HARRY VARDON, AT TOP OF SWING.

style, they are particularly worthy of our attention and our imitation; and certainly worthy of our attention, and probably also of our imitation, are the weapons with which he achieved his success.

He played with clubs considerably shorter and considerably lighter than those that are used by the great majority of golfers, and he drove very long balls. He drove longer balls than Taylor, who is certainly not a short driver, and Taylor has all the appearance of being the stronger man. And he drove longer balls without appearing to force the stroke at all, appearing rather as if he could hit a deal harder if he so pleased, as if he were always playing well within himself, with a good measure of reserve force to be called upon on occasion. He hit every ball perfectly cleanly, with his club-head always travelling in the right direction. This, and the fact that such force as he did apply was applied precisely at the right moment—this it was that sent his ball flying so far and so straight, and helped him to his championship. The manner of his beautifully easy swing is very well shown in the accompanying pictures.

It is, you will see by the first illustration, not a long swing. The club does not come even so far round as to be horizontal behind the back; the arms have not been thrown out far from the body, the right elbow is kept low. By way of compensation the turn of the body is great; the legs, the hips, the feet, all the lower half of the body, have taken a great share, an unusually great share, in the movements. Seldom will you see any one rising so freely on the toe of the right foot, bending the left knee so much, or even allowing the left shoulder to come so far away under, aided by the turn on the hips. It is in these particulars that Vardon's swing is big, and I should say that if a man knew his common error and his besetting sin to be a too wild swinging with the arms without sufficient movement of the body, too much arm work and arm hitting, too little help from the body turn, an excellent remedy would be for him to study again and

again, with purpose of some degree of imitation, the swing of Harry Vardon.

The same qualities, exhibited in reverse, you may see, I think, in the second illustration. The ease with which every movement is made is apparent; there has been no pressing, no forcing, no wild hitting with the arms. It does not look, indeed, as if the arms had been allowed to go away quite as freely from the body as in the case of some players whose styles we have held up for an ensample. But again there is the same compensation. The body has been allowed to follow on, and to follow the turn of the swing with wonderful freedom; the player is facing quite straight for the direction in which the ball is going, and that without an effort, with the left foot planted just as it was when the stroke was delivered, and the right heel has come away off the ground with all the freedom of action that we saw shown in the left foot when the swing was at its top, the turn at the hips has been very free and complete, and the right shoulder has come round, following it.

The two parts of the swing, the upward and the downward, match each other perfectly. You will almost always find it like that, I think, in the case of fine golfers, the parts of the swing all in proportion. There are few 'kings with two faces' among first-class golfers.

Vardon's style in driving is very notable, it is a triumph of mind over matter, of skill and science over the *vis inertiæ* of gutta-percha, that some men try to overcome by brute force. And this first victory of his in the championship with his light clubs made a difference in the weights of most golfers' clubs for a while to come. A general lightening and shortening took place, with the result that to their astonishment men found themselves able to drive quite as far and a deal more steadily. We owe Vardon a debt of gratitude for showing us what light clubs can do. And yet Vardon, though his principle is for light clubs, is not wedded to them, for the third illustration shows him in position for

HARRY VARDON, AT FINISH OF DRIVE.

HARRY VARDON, ADDRESSING FOR LONG, LOW APPROACH WITH DRIVING MASHIE.

playing a long approach with his driving mashie, and this is a very heavy club. It is true that he takes but a half-swing with it.

This is a stroke that Vardon plays marvellously well, and likely enough he owes no little of his success to his mastery of this stroke. The ball, struck very clean off the heavy mashie, flies wonderfully far and straight, and keeps very low. It is evident from the picture that Vardon has no design here of cutting the ball or putting it at all high in the air. His aim is evidently to play a strong half shot with lots of power, the kind of power that will send the ball boring into a solid headwind, if need be, and will not let it be blown about at the mercy of the air. It is one of his best strokes, and he uses it at all distances, often running up quite a short shot, little more than a putt, with a flat-faced mashie.

It is one of the features of Vardon's game, and a very excellent one, that he always seems to adopt the simplest way of doing everything. He will run up these approaches very often under conditions in which a self-respecting amateur of the second class would deem himself in honour bound to pitch up with a lofting mashie, but Vardon's ball would end nearer the hole. In the picture before us he has his mashie gripped very low down, so that the leather is not seen below the hand, and by the energy of the grip he would seem disposed to put a deal of right-hand push, so much as his easy style ever permits him to push, into the ball.

Vardon's temperament as a golfer seems to have all the qualities of his style, qualities that seem to have very few defects attaching to them. The quietness and control of the swing are reflected in the modest confidence of his manner. He is universally, we believe, liked as a man, universally, we are sure, feared as a golfer, and he plays most of his golf on the Ganton green, near Scarborough, where he is resident professional to the club.

At the moment of writing he has recently won the championship for the second time, and has the honour of

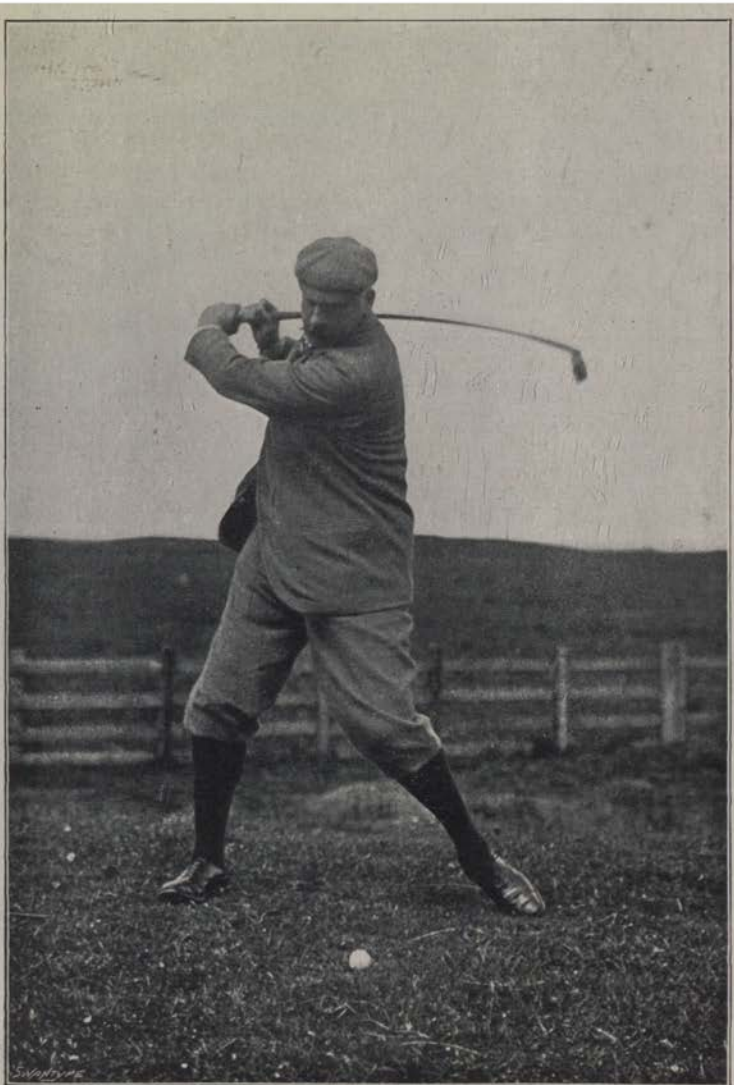
holding it unchallenged until the spring of 1899. And the winning of the championship of 1898–99 at Prestwick was an achievement of unusual merit, for the average of play at that championship, among the leaders, was better, in the opinion of the best qualified judges, than ever before. Moreover, it was not until the final round that Vardon took the lead. He had started, for him, not brilliantly, and Park led him by three strokes on the first day's play and by two strokes at the end of the third round. But a very fine finish, with 76 to Park's 79, put him into premier place by a stroke, and gave him his second championship. And the very next day, on the Nicholas links at Prestwick, he was again the winner of an open competition, with two splendid rounds of 75 each, showing, if there were any need of showing, the little cost of nerve and muscle with which his easy style accomplishes such great results.

Lately it appears that Vardon has rather increased the weight of his clubs, though still using them short; but the curve of the club shaft at the moment that he is exchanging the upward for the downward movement shows the force which, under all that appearance of ease, he is putting into the stroke. His driving at the Prestwick championship meeting is described as being wonderfully long as well as wonderfully sure.

Since that Prestwick meeting he has won a series of competitions that has no parallel in golfing annals, and the latest piece of good golfing news is that he has accepted Park's challenge (which we spoke of as still seeking an acceptor when the sketch of Park's golfing style went to press), and that the great match will be played over North Berwick and Ganton in the month of July.

Mr. ARNOLD BLYTH

Mr. Arnold Blyth is specially associated, as a golfer, with the course of the St. George's Golf Club at Sandwich, a



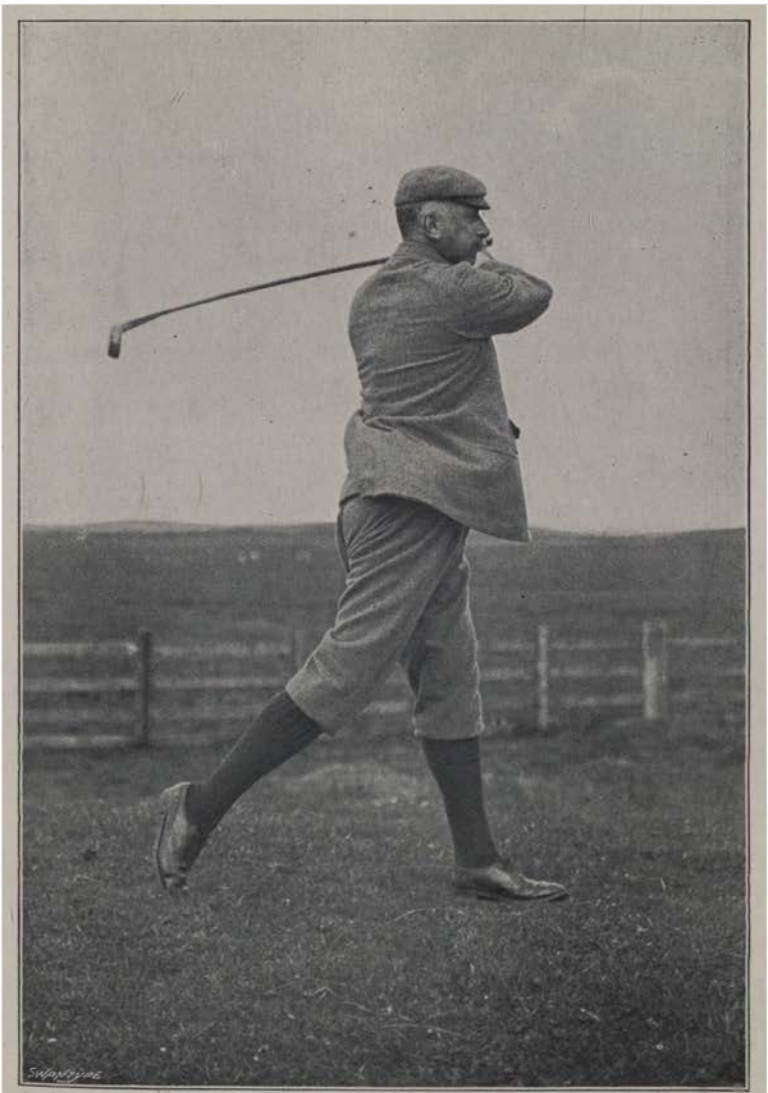
MR. ARNOLD BLYTH, AT TOP OF SWING.

course that is famous for its formidable bunkers and the length of the 'carries' from the tee. And there is something about Mr. Blyth's style of play that seems peculiarly adapted to a course of this nature, and to driving the ball fearlessly over these big hazards. There is a great charm about the fearless ease of this driving: it is a fine athletic performance. Mr. Blyth has a more powerful physique than is given to the average mortal, but for all that there is something in his method that some of us who are less gifted might perhaps imitate with advantage. The great merit of Mr. Blyth's style that is most apparent to the spectator is the quickness and freedom of his foot action—the turn up on the toes of the left foot in the upward swing, and on the toes of the right foot at the finish. It gives the swing all the appearance of being a long one, and probably it will surprise a good many who are used to see him play to find that his club at the top of the swing does not go further round. It only seems to go to the horizontal, and yet if any were to set himself to imitate what he supposes to be Mr. Blyth's driving style, before seeing this photograph, which reproduces it faithfully, he would be almost sure to make the mistake of bringing the club further round the head. And this illusive appearance of length in the upward swing is almost certainly given by the quickness of the foot movement.

It will be seen that there is very little turning of the body on the hips as the club rises, and this gives a little appearance of restraint, when the movement is caught and arrested by photography, that the swing seen in action certainly does not suggest. It looks a wonderfully graceful and easy performance all through. But if the picture suggests that all is not supple movement—that there is a cramped hinge somewhere—in the upward half of the stroke, there is no question whatever about the length and freedom of the finish and the follow-on after the ball is struck. Here, in the second full-page illustration, is a pose with which a sculptor could find no fault. The characteristic straightening of the left knee

and the upright carriage of the body, raising the figure to its full height, have a peculiarly attractive effect, and it is impossible to conceive a more completely free movement of the right foot and of the entire body and limbs than is shown here. The easy turn of the body on the hips is as noticeable in this case as its absence was noticeable before. The body has turned so completely as to face directly the line in which the ball is flying—far over those great Sandwich bunkers. A more perfect study of the finish of the stroke cannot be found or imagined.

The practical result of all this is that Mr. Blyth drives a ball that is long in its carry, and when its carry is finished has still a deal of life in it for the run. It is a kind of ball that combines length of carry with rather a low trajectory at the finish, and in this it differs a little from the ball that most long drivers achieve. There is a singular consistency about the parabola of Mr. Blyth's drives. Whether down wind or against the wind he varies the height of his driving but little, and for this sufficient reason, that the normal parabola of his drive is high enough for the ball to get most of the advantage that a following wind can give it, and at the same time it has the aforesaid tendency (to a low trajectory at the finish) which prevents its soaring up in the teeth of the wind and being blown whithersoever the wind is inclined to take it. For this reason Mr. Blyth is especially formidable on a windy day at Sandwich—and the windy days at Sandwich are none too few. There are many golfers who have the knack of keeping their ball low against the wind, and so having it well under control; but this skimming, wind-cheating kind of ball, that pays so excellently on a flat course, does not do at Sandwich, where there are almost always high carries to be negotiated. It is then needful not only to be able to control a very low ball, but to control a tolerably high-flying one, which is a far harder matter. The ordinary first-class golfer is just a little at a loss when he has to drive a high ball in the wind's eye, but it is a problem that does



MR. ARNOLD BLYTH, AT FINISH OF DRIVE.

not seem to give Mr. Blyth the least trouble in the world. His normal shot suffices—it goes high enough, and yet not too high—and when it comes to the ground it has all that running power left in it that is essential for long driving against the wind. Mr. Ball has often proved himself a wonderfully fine player in a high wind, but he achieves his results by something like *tours de force*—by keeping the ball very low, or at just sufficient height to carry the obstacle confronting him. But the style of driving that served him so excellently and was so fascinating to watch when he was at the zenith of his game, was as unlike as can be the ball that Mr. Blyth normally drives. Both had long carries, but whereas Mr. Ball's drives had a way of soaring up at the finish, and dropping straight, with scarcely any run—a most telling style of ball for landing on the putting green and staying near the hole—Mr. Blyth's ball will fall with that rather flat trajectory that we have noticed, and run unusually far. Both styles have their own merits, but Mr. Blyth's makes for longer driving, and it would be interesting, if we might, to see how the result is arrived at.

Perhaps the best indication of the manner in which it is achieved is to be seen in the half-page portrait of Mr. Blyth addressing himself for the driving stroke. It may be noticed that his hands are here peculiarly far in advance—far to his left—with the result that the face of the club must be looking rather downward on the ball. It is to be presumed that when his club comes down on the ball, at the moment of striking, the face of the club is at the same inclination as in the address. The effect of this must be to put some little overspin on the ball, or at least to counteract any excessive measure of that underspin which Professor Tait has taught us to be an essential of a long carry, but which must surely tend, when exaggerated, to bring the ball rather straight down to the ground at the end of its carry, and so prevent it from running far after landing. With most good players, at the moment of address the shaft of the club seems to lead up

in something like a straight line from the ball to the player's eye. But in the case of Mr. Blyth a prolongation of the club-shaft upwards would pass over, or even outside, the point of the left shoulder. The inference seems almost necessary that this peculiarity in his style of address, and the consequent turning over of the club-face to look slightly downward on the ball, is the cause both of its low trajectory at the end of the carry and of the useful run that it always has upon it afterwards. His address gives us the impression of being that of a man proposing to keep his ball low, in the wind's eye; but it is, as a matter of fact, just Mr. Blyth's normal manner of addressing.

A graceful and easy player with all his clubs, and very rapid both in the stroke itself and the pace at which he starts off walking after the ball, Mr. Blyth gives one peculiarly the idea of a man playing golf for pleasure. And it is an idea that he succeeds in realising much better than most of us. He is a Scotsman, yet he plays most of his golf in the South; but he has certainly never been bitten with that *furore* for competitions which the Scotsman of the old school is rather apt to consider the mark of the—English golfer. If Mr. Blyth can avoid a competition by a railway journey he will gladly do so, and it is chiefly for this reason that his name does not loom largely on the lists of championships and the like. He plays golf for his amusement rather than glory, and has only once or twice entered for the big amateur tournament. But he manages to give his opponents a deal of amusement when he does enter, as the present writer has every reason to remember, Mr. Blyth having carried the match with him, in a certain championship tournament at Sandwich, to the twenty-second hole.

Beside the picture of Mr. Blyth addressing his ball, I am putting—for purpose of comparison and further illustration—a picture of a golfer expressly addressing himself to drive against the wind, wherein it is seen that in this special mode of address the hands are to the player's left of a plane drawn

MR. ARNOLD BLYTH, ADDRESSING THE BALL.

ADDRESS FOR LOW DRIVE AGAINST WIND.

straight from the ball to the player's eye. In the ordinary address of this player, in a calm, hands, eye, and ball would be, roughly speaking, in the same plane (vertically), whereas Mr. Blyth's hands are always, in his ordinary address, a little to the left of this plane; and it is for that reason, no doubt, that he habitually drives the kind of ball that we all try to drive against the wind.

Mr. ERIC HAMBRO

Mr. Eric Hambro's style and manner of playing golf give a fine instance of the natural imitativeness without which it is perhaps impossible to become a good golfer. He has played a great deal with Mr. Arnold Blyth at Sandwich. Playing so much at Sandwich, and being physically what he is—six foot and a half high and fairly broad in proportion—it was perhaps inevitable that Mr. Hambro should learn to drive a very long ball. The big carries of Sandwich demanded it, and his own power made it easy to him. But what was not inevitable was that he should solve the problem of getting over these big bunkers exactly in the manner that he did. A deal of that manner has obviously been picked up by him—very likely unconsciously—from Mr. Arnold Blyth. The two drive very much the same kind of ball, low and yet with a long carry, but Mr. Hambro's does not get quite that nice low trajectory at the finish which is so good a point in Mr. Blyth's driving. Very probably Mr. Hambro has rather a longer carry on his drive; but Mr. Blyth's ball will more than make this up in the run. There is a likeness in the swings of the two men, but the most striking likeness in their golf is more a likeness of manner, so to call it, than of style. Mr. Blyth, we have said, always looks as if he were playing the game for pleasure—with a poignant sense of deserving kicking for saying so, we might even say that he seems to play it blithesomely—he does not dwell over his stroke or

make a headachy study of it, he seems to enjoy it all. And so too, almost in greater measure, Mr. Hambro. He looks as if he were not taking the slightest care, or paying the slightest attention to the stroke. He scarcely seems to be looking at the ball, but he flogs at it with vehemence, and away it goes, hit as truly as if he had looked at it for a week. It is all very jolly golf to watch.

And then, as soon as either of these strong men and long drivers has hit the ball, he strides away after it at the rate that is commonly described as a thousand miles an hour, and is sufficiently exhausting for the less long-legged over the Saharas of Sandwich. No time is wasted when the stroke is struck, and I believe that these two, Mr. Hambro and Mr. Blyth, have been round the Sandwich course not only in the shortest score, but also in the shortest time, on record.

The merit of the styles of both these players, as of most good players, is in their follow-on. Mr. Blyth gets his follow-on chiefly by the quick turn on the feet. With Mr. Hambro the follow-on is achieved rather by letting the body come forward as the ball is struck. I am sorry that I have not been able to get this moment of his swing caught by photography. The moment shown is less characteristic. At the instant of Mr. Hambro's hitting the ball his left hip is bent well out in the direction that the ball is to go—just in the attitude of a batsman hitting a half-volley along the ground.

Beyond everything else Mr. Hambro's is a free style—it is a style that looks rather like a 'hit-or-miss' style, as the phrase is; but that cannot be a fair description of a style in which the hits are so very much more frequent than the misses. It is a most attractive style to watch. When Mr. Hambro is in his form there is no finer player in the world, and this is sufficiently attested by what he has done, holding the record at 78 for the lowest score for one round ever returned in the St George's Vase competition. And

MR. ERIC HAMBRO, AT TOP OF CLEEK SHOT.

this is a competition in which all the best have, one time or another, taken part. It is a beautiful sight, when he is playing well, to see the ease and therewith the astonishing accuracy with which he puts every ounce of his strength into a drive or cleek shot. His work with the cleek is even more remarkable than with the driver, for these iron clubs seem to demand from most of us a more careful study than we care to give to the strokes with the wooden clubs—I mean that it is more easy for most of us to hit *freely* with wood than with iron. This difference does not seem to occur to Mr. Hambro, nor greatly, for that matter, to Mr. Blyth either; but in this they are rather distinguished from most golfers, even of the best class.

It is at the top of his swing for one of these tremendous cleek drives that the illustration shows Mr. Hambro. The chief points that seem to strike one are the slight degree of turn of the body on the hips in comparison with the freedom of the knee and shoulder action; but it is rather by the length of the follow-on, after the ball is hit, that the power to send it so far is intimated, than by anything that is shown in this part of the swing. The bending of the right knee, as shown here, it may be pointed out, permits the body to be carried a little towards the player's right, while the club is coming up, without any movement of the head; and this admits of the body being carried forwards again, as the club comes down, so as to 'get the weight of the body into the stroke,' as we say of a forward drive at cricket, which Mr. Hambro's stroke much resembles.

On the whole it is not a style, perhaps, that should be too closely imitated, apart from the consideration that it would be impossible of the most distant imitation by any one who was not learning golf as a boy. A more studied manner is the better pattern for our years of discretion—but it is a jolly style to watch.

BERNARD SAYERS

This 'running up' stroke with the iron that I have thought well to illustrate by photographs of Bernard Sayers taken in the act of executing it is one of the most useful that a golfer can acquire. It is useful in special cases—as, for instance, when there is some roughish ground, but nothing requiring a high loft, just in front of the ball. This, it is true, may alternatively be overpassed by the higher and more generally used lofting stroke. But again there is a case when the ordinary lofting stroke is quite inapplicable, and yet a long run up, as with the driving putter, is quite out of the question; and this is when rough ground lies immediately before your ball (else you could use the putter), and just before the green is a low bank with the hole so closely beyond it that it is not possible to pitch over the bank and yet lie near the hole. In this case the only feasible and trustworthy mode of approach is this running up shot with the iron. The low loft will take you safely over the rough ground immediately before the ball, and the strong run on the ball will take it over the bank rather as if it had been played off the putter. To loft on the bank and ensure just the right break to allow the ball to run the length of the hole is too much to expect of golfing nature.

Of this useful stroke there is, I think, no better player than Bernard Sayers, the subject of the illustration. Perhaps it seems invidious to mention this stroke as the one of which he has peculiar mastery, for he is master of all the strokes that the golfer has any need to know; but I have seen him use it so often with great effect that it seemed specially suitable to ask him to illustrate it, and we can scarcely go amiss in studying his mode of playing it. The principal point to notice about the stroke is that, though the distance from the hole at which it is used is just that at which we should ordinarily play what is technically called a wrist

BERNARD SAYERS, ADDRESSING FOR A RUNNING APPROACH SHOT.

stroke, in this running up shot with the iron the wrists are not used—in the sense of being allowed to bend to make the stroke—at all. They are held rigid, and the strength of the stroke is given from the shoulder and by the turn of the body from the hips. Comparing Sayers's position in the second illustration with the position of the first, this is seen at once—the degree of bend in the arms is almost the same in the one as in the other; the wrist, if it has given at all, has given rather in the way of allowing the knuckles of the right hand to come higher during the course of the stroke than right under, as they would naturally have come in course of playing a lofting stroke of the same length with the iron; the right forefinger and thumb have kept their grip rigidly throughout the stroke, and so communicated the force originated by letting the right shoulder come well down and forward, and by the turn of the body on the hips, both which movements are well shown by a comparison of the two illustrations.

I remember seeing Sayers play this stroke with great effect in an important match when approaching the corner of the Dyke hole, coming in, at St. Andrews, and to any one acquainted with the green this hole, with its low bank before the putting green, will give a very good example of the circumstances under which the stroke is peculiarly useful. There is no form of approaching that is not familiar to Sayers. Trained on the North Berwick green—which used, in the days of the short course, to put accurate approach at a great premium—he could play the lofting approach stroke to perfection, and make his ball lie as dead after its loft as any man; but he knew well enough that to pitch on the green of the corner of the Dyke hole when the course was hard and lie close to the hole, without over-running, was not within the power of humanity. The occasion called for the special stroke here illustrated, and the man showed himself equal to the occasion by employing the stroke to such purpose that the ball, pitching well short of the low bank, ran up over it to the green and lay dead. It is a stroke that many another

golfer can perhaps play equally well, though none I think can play it better, and it is a stroke that no golfer can afford to be without if he is to feel himself equal to every emergency that can reasonably be expected to arise. It is not a difficult stroke to acquire, presenting nothing like the difficulty of the ordinary lofting approach stroke, for it requires no cut to be put on the ball. The rigidity of the wrists is the essential feature of the stroke, keeping the blade of the iron in such a position that the ball flies off quickly and low, with plenty of running power after it touches the ground. You will often see a fine player use it when the simple running up stroke with the putter, without any loft at all, would have answered equally well, but as a matter of preference the player has used the iron in the way described.

Sayers can hold his own with any man in the world to-day, not by special virtue of his mastery of this, but of all strokes. He is peculiarly accurate in all modes of approach, and one of the very finest putters in the professional class. The care that he gives to every stroke is most praiseworthy, and he calculates all chances with a thoroughness that sometimes becomes a little wearying to the opponent. If it be a fault, however, it is assuredly on the right side, and this excessive carefulness has gained him many a point that another, with less deliberate methods, might have missed. Though of short stature, Sayers is built on square and athletic lines, and is an accomplished gymnast. Even now, in his middle age, he is playing as fine a game as any man, and drives a powerful ball, especially against the wind. He is one of those who have lately taken to playing with shorter clubs than he has used throughout his golfing life, and appears to have gained certainty and lost nothing in length of driving by the change. His brother-in-law, Davie Grant, an excellent player and judge of the game, told the present writer that he considered Sayers to have strengthened his game considerably by his use of shorter clubs. At the end of a long match Sayers, as he expressed it, had formerly

BERNARD SAYERS, AT FINISH OF RUNNING APPROACH SHOT.

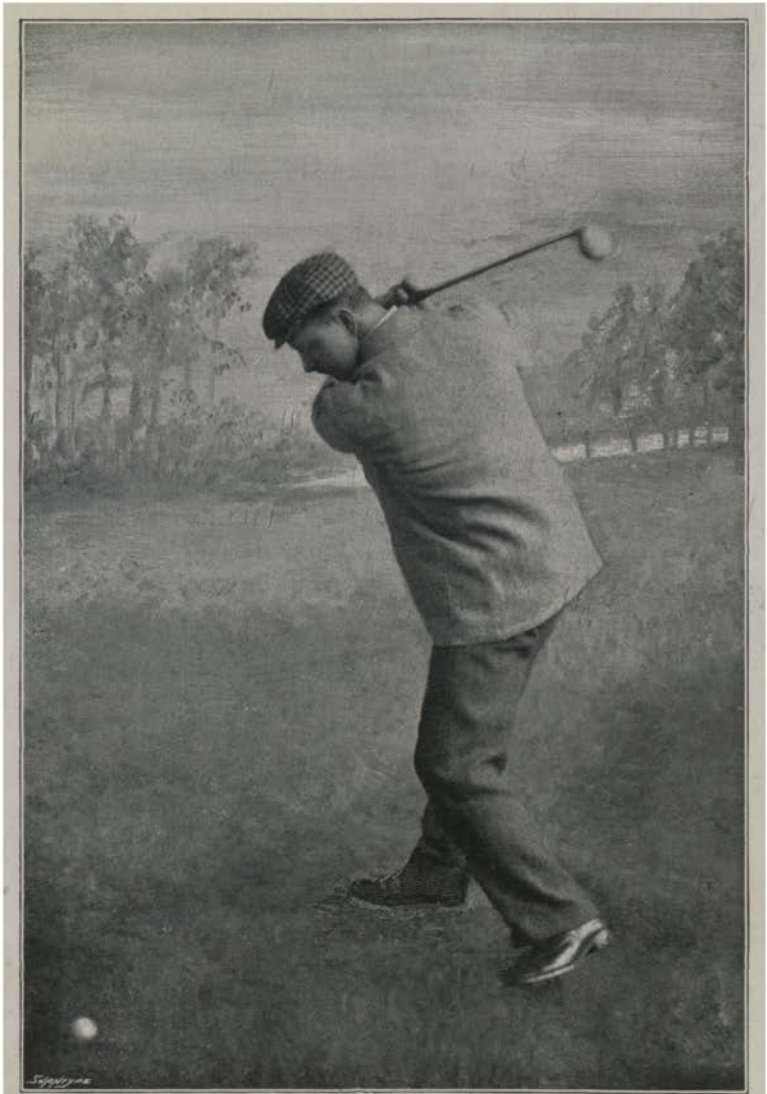
seemed to be labouring with his long clubs; now, on the contrary, he seemed to be playing well within his powers, without fatigue, right up to the end. There can be no doubt that this was sound criticism.

Sayers and Davie Grant together, even before the former had shortened his weapons, made a tremendously strong combination in a foursome, and have won some notable matches. Especially noteworthy was a match they played against the two Kirkaldys—Andrew and the late poor Hugh. They won this match easily enough, in spite of the great name, so justly earned, of their opponents. Then Sayers challenged Andrew to a home and home single, and gaining a heavy advantage on his home green of North Berwick—which, truth to say, in those days of the short course, gave rather too heavy an advantage to intimate local knowledge—won the long match by a narrow margin, though Andrew played up most gallantly at St. Andrews against the heavy odds, and actually had the match all square with a few holes to go. But Sayers was nothing daunted, and, playing with rare pluck, won as fine a match as could be seen by two up and one to play. Of his successes in scoring competitions there is no space to tell the tale. Championship honours have never fallen to him, but he has made a good bid for them more than once, and is always a foe to be feared at these great gatherings. In other competitions, scarcely less important than the championship in point of the quality of the competitors, he has been first time and again; but what is especially to be seen is that if not first he is always high on the list at the finish. He never seems to go clean off his game, as happens to most others, even of the best, and perhaps this steady excellence is to be ascribed in great measure to the excessive care that he gives to every stroke he plays. He is a great favourite with all who know him, amateur or professional, and especially, it would seem, with the newspaper reporters, who delight in chronicling 'Ben's' achievements. They are well worthy of record, and he long

held the record at North Berwick. He is a first-rate maker of a club and a ball, and an excellent man of business; altogether a strong personality in the golfing world, and one of the finest players of the running up approach, according to the illustration, whose methods can be studied.

There is yet another stroke of which he seems to me to have rather a special mastery, and this is a full swing shot, played with rather a slow swing, its special feature being the flat trajectory of the club-head as it comes away from the ball, and again as it comes down to it—a long slow sweep, with arms kept very long extended as the club-head is brought away from the ball, and extended again long before it is brought back to the ball. As a rule, Sayers seems to use the stroke when he does not want quite his longest shot, and I have seen him play it again and again with great effect with a cleek or other long iron club, the ball starting low and very slowly, as it seems, holding its way a good deal longer than its initial velocity had led you to expect, and finishing with a slight curve in from the right. He used to play this shot beautifully, going to the hole over the corner of the firwood on the old North Berwick course, before its extension. Besides this, Sayers used to make good capital out of the low trajectory of the arc that his club-head described coming away from, and again coming down to, the ball, in driving against the wind. Again, as in the cleek shot, the ball started low and slowly, but it kept its way beyond belief, and, not soaring at all, as he generally allowed the cleek shot to do, but still coming in a little from the right, was far from exhausted when it pitched and ran on gaily. He used to get wonderfully long balls against the wind by this method.

I should much like to have got a photograph of him in the execution of this stroke, but the emphatic and interesting position would have been when the club was one-third of its total arc away from the ball in the up stroke, and, again, two-thirds of the way down. At neither of these points is there a moment's natural pause to give the photographer a chance,



ARCHIE SIMPSON, AT TOP OF DRIVE.

and a pause prolonged deliberately always gives a look of unreality to any golfing portrait that strives to take advantage of it.

ARCHIE SIMPSON

Probably the first thing that any one will say on first sight of these portraits of Archie Simpson is, 'Oh! this does not give any idea at all of his length, his freedom, of swing.' That was my own first impression on regarding them. And yet one has to recognise the fact that a photograph does not tell lies—except in its own peculiar way of exaggerating that which is near at the expense of that which is far—so that the pictures must be, virtually speaking, 'right.' That is the way that Simpson really does swing. That is the length, or shortness, of his upward swing. That the fine follow-through of his finish.

So that it really comes to this, that we must remodel our impressions, not of the portrait but of the actual swing. Simpson really does go no further back than this, and therefore we must look for some other explanation of the impression of length that his whole swing gives us. There is no reasonable manner of doubt that this explanation is to be found in the style of his finish. If the back swing is a little tied up, not quite as free as in some of those ideals that we have had set before us, the down swing and its finish are as free as we could have them. We could not have more complete freedom.

There is this curious lack of proportion between the two parts of the swing: the second part is out of proportion longer than the first part. The ideal of the golfing swing is, of course, that there should be no such disproportion, that all should be in harmony. But if there is to be any disproportion at all, it is certain that it is very much better it should be on the side that Simpson's style shows it—that the

finish should be longer, freer, than the beginning—rather than *vice versâ*. Anything at all cramped in the upward motions of the swing is undesirable; anything at all cramped in the downward motions is sheerly fatal.

It seems very ridiculous to mention the word 'cramped' in any connection with Simpson's swing. It has the look of the very perfection of freedom. And yet the look of that first portrait, only, does not express that. The second one more or less explains it; but it is to Simpson's living style that we must look for a perfect explanation.

No man enjoys hitting the ball more than he does; no man gives us the idea of playing golf with a greater notion of getting pleasure out of the game; and there is no doubt that he enjoys hitting the ball hard better than he enjoys any other part of the game. But it would be a great mistake—Simpson has over and over again by his performance proved its mistake—to suppose that he cannot moderate his delight in hard hitting sufficiently to be sure as well as far, and to lay his iron shots near and his putts dead, as well as send his drives two hundred, and odd, yards. But I think if we consider this matter of his pleasure in the hard hitting, his sheer delight in hitting the ball and seeing it go, we may detect something of that keenness in the manner even of his upward swing.

He has not gone very far up—the club is not even horizontal behind his head. He has not gone very far round—his left heel is not lifted much from the ground, his body has turned but little at the hips, his left shoulder has not come very far round. All this means, I take it, that whether he has taken the club slowly or swiftly away from the ball, he has come quickly to the top of his swing—more quickly than one who was more free and flexible in all these motions that we have named. If he has come to the top quickly, that means to say that he has come quickly to the point at which he may begin to go down again. He may quickly satisfy his desire to be hitting the ball. This,

ARCHIE SIMPSON, AT FINISH OF DRIVE.

I think, is in part the explanation of the comparative shortness and compactness of Simpson's up swing, and again it is in part the explanation why that swing in action gives us the impression of being so free, whereas the photograph, which cannot tell lies, tells us that the least important half of the swing is, in its motions, not very free. But if not free in its motions it is very free in its pace. Simpson, in his eager desire to be down on the ball again, is very quick in getting to the top of the swing, and this speed in getting to the top gives the impression of freedom, and is achieved, on his methods, without violation of first principles. He has gone but a little way back; therefore, he has accomplished that journey quicker than one who makes the journey longer, and he is so compact in all the movements of that short backward swing that he has little readjustment to do before he is ready to give the ball that welt in which he delights.

There are many interesting points, less distinctive, to notice in his style. He is a very long driver, and the ball, in common with the practice of most of our longest—Rolland, Toogood, in a measure Braid, and I may mention a less known one, Rowe, of Ashdown Forest—is placed nearer the left than the right foot, with the right foot drawn back. The right elbow is noticeably low, the grip is well in palm of both hands—the grip of a man who intends no half measures. The second illustration, of the finish of the stroke, shows all notion of crampedness, even of photographic cramp, entirely vanished, thrown to the winds after the ball. There is no hurry to get back out of this position on to the ball—all had to be given up to that delightful business of hitting the ball—the body has turned perfectly freely on the hips now, the right shoulder has come right down, and under, the right heel right up off the ground, and even the straightening of the right knee has helped in sending the body following on after the ball.

Simpson's delight in hitting the ball seems to be an infectious kind of pleasure. It gives the spectator keen

delight to watch it. And scarcely less delightful than his manner with his drives are his full iron shots—there is no half swing, as some of the moderns use, about them—they are really hard full smacks, that seem to make the very ball laugh as it goes away.

Archie Simpson comes from a nursery of long drivers. It is a wonderful example of the power of emulation—the list of long drivers that have been reared on that fine little green of Leven, on the north shore of the Firth of Forth. There is nothing particular in the character of the links to indicate that it would grow a crop of Jehus. It is not a very long green—not so long as many others that do not produce such long driving children. Yet there the fact is; it has grown Rolland, and Braid, his cousin, there was the late Jack Simpson, poor fellow, who died soon after winning the championship at Prestwick, on which occasion Rolland was second to him, there are the two Kinnells, and there is Archie Simpson. All these are long, some of them are immense, drivers. Of Jack Simpson Mr. Everard used to say that with the exception of Mr. Edward Blackwell he had the finest driving style of any man he had ever seen—and Mr. Everard is a very good judge. It was in this school that Archie Simpson learned his golf, and since there is no peculiarity in the links to account for the length of driving that men learned there, the only way to account for it is on the theory of emulation. Probably it was Rolland, Rolland with his enormous power, that began to drive farther than other people, and once he set the fashion the others had to be in it, or to be left behind. The consequence was that the whole lot of them grew to drive immense distances, and to startle the rest of the golfing world when they began to show themselves off elsewhere.

Simpson's first engagement, I fancy, was at Bembridge, where he surely must have overshot a great many of the holes. Then he was at Carnoustie for a while, and for several years now has been at Balgownie, near Aberdeen,

where he lately engaged in the big foursome in which his partner was Sayers, against Andrew Kirkaldy and Herd. He has not done a very great deal in the way of exhibition matches, and it is only on that account that his name is not larger in the public eye than it is. He has all the power. But it is part of his exceedingly pleasant and modest character that he should refrain from offering himself overmuch as a public spectacle, while at the same time it is a part of his sturdy self-respect that he should always give a good account of himself when the public does see him.

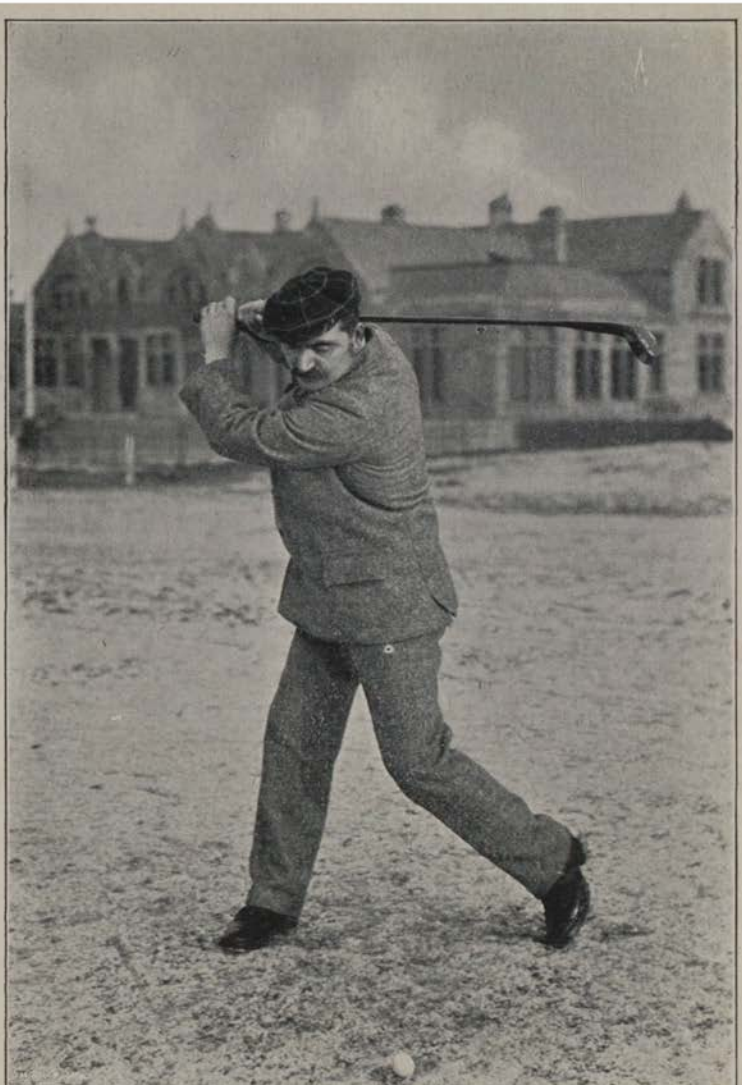
W. FERNIE

It is not such a bad record, as golfing records go, to be an ex-champion and to have played a game of the very first class for a considerable number of years. Willie Fernie has done all this, and he has done a good deal more—he has made a methodical study of the methods of the driving swing, and can not only play golf, but also is able to teach it. A few years ago he was down in the south on tour—a lecturing tour—and the subject matter of his lecture was the manner of playing the royal and ancient game of golf. Maybe he had some maxims to inculcate that were new; at all events there was a novelty about his way of presenting them. He had a certain pungent humour that made them go down, and when precept failed to find expression, he helped the lecture out by that better brother of precept, example. He showed, club in hand, how the thing should be done. He showed also, club in hand, how the thing should not be done, not sparing the feelings of an individual, if so be he might hold him up as the 'horrid warning' to the rest of the class. And all this was done with a pleasant humour that carried it off without giving offence to its victim. Many, very many, of his scholars came away from his lectures better golfers than they had gone in, and those

whose golf was not materially helped were at least interested and amused.

The principal maxims of his teaching were divided into several headings—the stance, the grip, the arm action, the turning of the body; and Fernie made his pupils follow him in all their movements, just as a drill-sergeant moves his recruits. 'Elbows down' was a great maxim, designed to help the pupil in keeping the club-head in the right position throughout the swing. Fernie, by careful observation and by study of his own swing, both when he was 'on' and when he was 'off' (so that he might learn the secrets equally of success and of failure), had come to the conclusion that letting the club-face wander from the right angle was a common cause of bad play, and I do not know that this has been particularly noticed by any other teacher; and certainly all that Fernie has to say on the subject is worthy of every attention. He has given the swing such careful study, and has observed so exactly the many aberrations of many amateurs, that he is able to fix on the weak point at a glance. Of my own experience I can attest this.

Among his pupils Fernie made a great point of getting the body swing correct and free, recognising, as others have done before him, though perhaps none quite so fully, that it is the body turn, giving the 'follow-on,' that puts power into the stroke, rather than any efforts of the arm muscles. The excellent follow-on we may probably say to be the feature of Fernie's own game, and if it required justification none better could be found for it. About the first of the illustrations of Fernie in the act of striking there is nothing really very remarkable, though every action appears of the best and most correct kind. His is not a very long swing; not the swing of a lithe lissom figure, but rather of one compacted of strength. The club is just at the horizontal behind the back. Yet even so it is further round than in the case of Vardon, whose figure, curiously enough, is just of that lissom kind that one would expect to see lending itself to



W. Fernie, at Top of Swing.

length of swing. But Vardon has made very much his own the secret that true timing and true accuracy are of more value than application of great force.

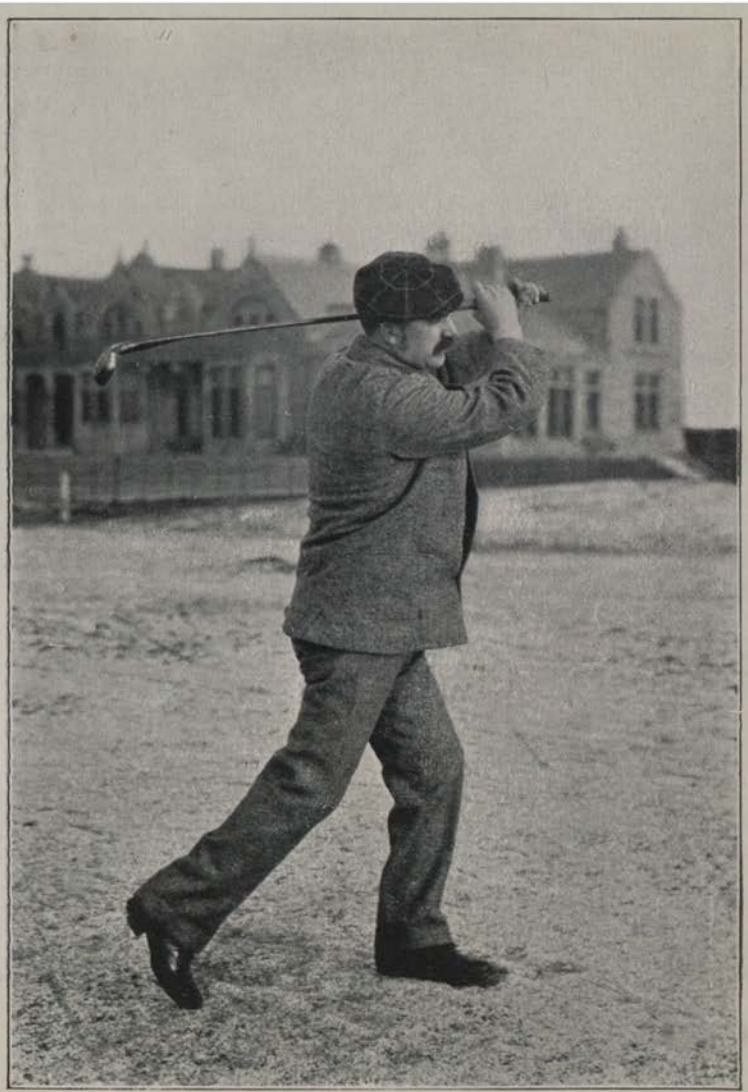
Fernie's upward swing, we may say then, shows an orthodox perfection; the left shoulder has come nicely down and round. Even such a little glimpse of the grip of the right hand as the picture shows us is enough to make it clear that the club has moved freely in the right hand and is resting on the web between the forefinger and the thumb; the body has turned freely at the hips, and if there is a point that is more noticeable than another it is the freedom shown in that bend of the left knee-joint, allowing the swing to be made without any stiff strained point. Fernie's is essentially a powerful as well as an easy swing. We know no other that combines the two qualities more perfectly. Vardon's is the acme of ease, Mr. Blackwell's of power, but neither of these seems to show quite the same perfect mean of the two qualities as Fernie's shows. Necessarily, with such free action of the knee, the left heel has come well up off the ground, but the right knee is not quite straightened, with the result that though the weight is thrown on to the right leg, the body has scarcely moved towards the right from its position when the ball was being addressed.

But when we come to look at the second illustration, showing the finish of the swing, here I think we do see a point that is noticeable. In Willie Park's book on golf he refers to a peculiarity in the swing of his father, a very famous golfer—none more so—of the olden time, that sometimes, after hitting the ball, he would follow on so far as even to move a pace or two after it in the direction of its flight. In the finish of Fernie's stroke we see a suggestion of the very same action not quite so fully carried out. With the body thrown forward and the bend of the left knee, he almost seems to be on the point of walking or running a pace or two after the ball. And this noteworthy effect is produced by the excellent manner in which Fernie finishes

out his stroke, and the great 'follow-on,' of which he proves the value by his practice, as he has insisted on it in his theory. We should notice too, I think, the way in which the arms have come forward, and are well away in front of the head, even after the club has come right back over the left shoulder. This is yet further evidence of the value that he has put on the 'follow-on.' The turn of the body is again very complete—the player is facing directly in the line of the ball's flight—the right shoulder has been allowed to come very far round and forward, and the whole effect has been helped by letting the right foot come right away off the ground, with right knee still a little bent, by way of further aid to this very free 'follow.'

It is impossible not to be constantly drawing comparisons between Fernie's swing and that of Vardon, both of which illustrate so very well the value of the free movement of the legs and lower part of the body. Vardon's appears to me the acme of grace, Fernie's to combine, with scarcely less grace, a greater appearance of power. It is a more compact, more forceful movement.

I do not know any man who is capable of playing a strong game day after day with scarcely a semblance of mistake better than Fernie when at his best. It seems a hard thing to say of a player who has had such a great measure of success both in big matches and in competitions that he has failed to do himself full justice in these big events; and yet I do believe it to be true. I believe that a certain nervousness, inseparable from certain temperaments, has stood in the way of more frequent successes. In private matches he has proved himself so very accurate and so very strong, the accuracy and the power apparently costing him no effort; and this power of going on day after day playing splendid golf is no doubt to be ascribed, amongst other causes, to the accurate ease of his style. Whatever his golfing lectures may be worth, and they have proved themselves of value, there can be no question but that his game furnishes



W. Fernie, at Finish of Drive.

us with one of the very best object-lessons in golf that we can possibly want. This knee-action of his and the fine free turn of the body may be difficult indeed for a player to acquire after he has come to years of discretion and stiff muscles; but they supply him at least with a useful ideal, and, as we are told in 'Peveril of the Peak,' it is more important that our ideals should be high than that we should attain to them. Fernie's execution is a high ideal indeed to aim at, and yet he seems to make such an easy game of golf that we might be tempted to think that we all could achieve it.

The same fine free, easy, and yet compact and forceful swing characterises his use of every club. In general he is a fine putter, but he has times—as who has not?—when this essential faculty seems to fail him.

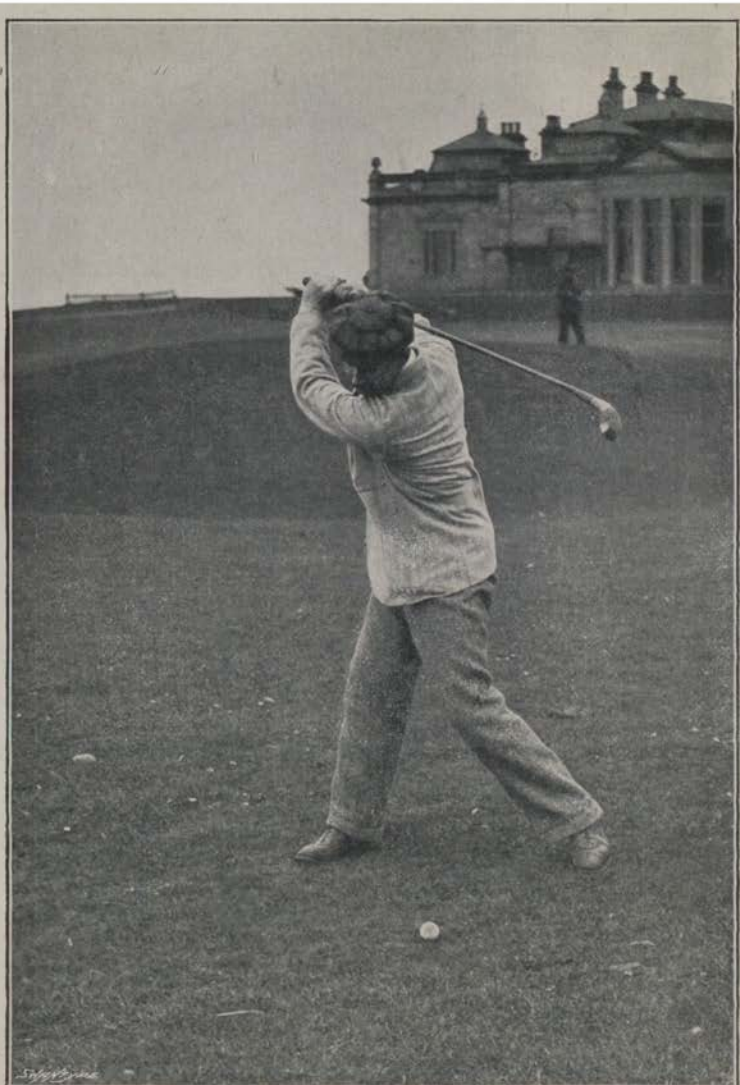
The links of Troon, where he now resides, owes a great deal to his skilful care of its green. The fine club house comes in as a background to these illustrations of Fernie's methods. Prestwick, the neighbour links of Troon, is almost equally familiar to him, but there is scarcely a green of note on which he has not made his prowess felt, and he carried his successful lecturing tour into the heart of English metropolitan golf, and had many pupils among the members of the club at Wimbledon.

A. HERD

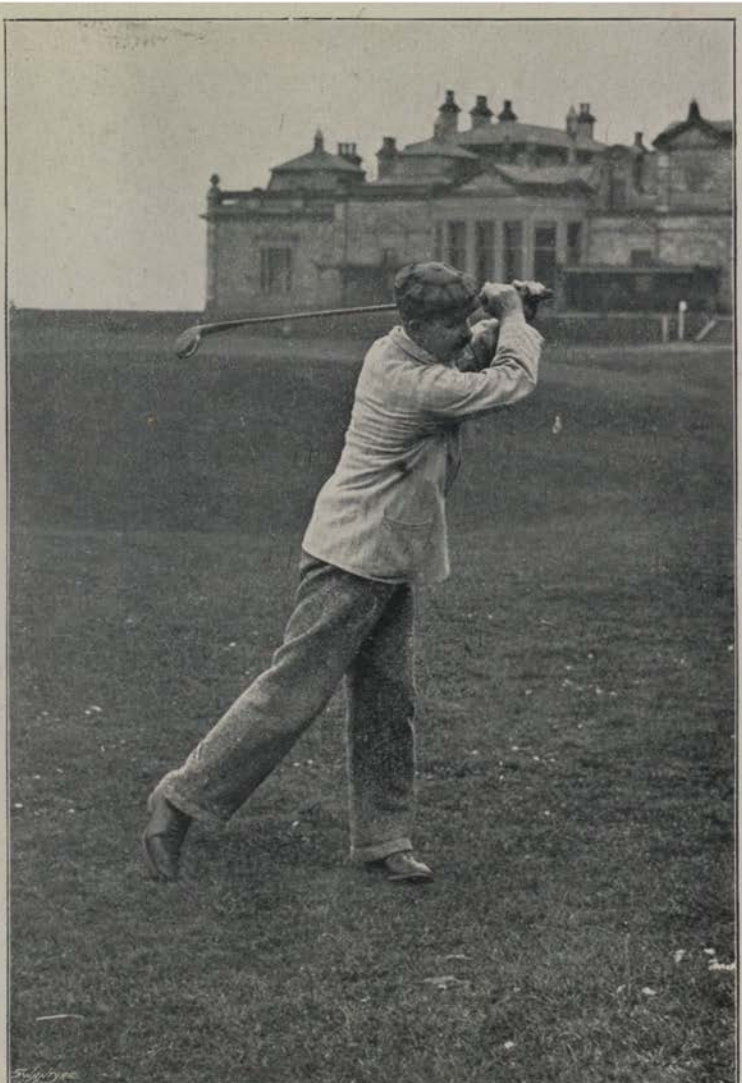
The characteristic that strikes one first and most forcibly in watching Herd play is something that is perhaps best suggested by calling it the 'compactness' of his style. It is not only that he always seems to be playing well 'within himself,' not exerting his muscles to the utmost of their power, but also that the whole movement of the swing seems very perfectly under control, and the entire stroke to be accomplished within a small compass. He does not seem to reach his arms out very far as the club goes back, nor again

to throw them out very freely from him after the ball is hit. And this is, in some points, no high praise; for it does not seem to imply the much more than merely respectable length of drive that Herd attains. Yet, if we watch the line of travel of the club-head carefully, we shall see that though the stroke is not very long, and the arc not very flat during any great section, still that it is a flat arc just at the important moment—that is to say, the moment at which the club is passing the ball. This is the important point. What the club is doing at other moments of the swing is not of much value except as a means of making the flat direction of travel at the moment the ball is struck easier to compass. Yet if this can be managed satisfactorily, as Herd undoubtedly manages it, we have no right to quarrel with what the club is doing when it is far away from the ball, and anything that Herd may possibly be thought to lose by his methods in one way is certainly, in his case, more than compensated by the virtue of what we have called his 'compactness.'

It is to this compactness of his style that we probably ought to look for an explanation of his wonderful steadiness. Herd's latest big performance was in the foursome match in which he and Kirkaldy defeated Simpson and Sayers, who had challenged any pair. The winners had a certain advantage in this big encounter, for whereas Simpson and Sayers could not select, as the green of their choice, one that was familiar to both (and did, in fact, choose Aberdeen, where Sayers was a comparative stranger), the other pair, making choice of St. Andrews, met their opponents on a home green which gave them every confidence. At no stage of the match, however, did Herd and Kirkaldy show that they required any other advantage than that which their skill and power gave them. They were three up even on the Aberdeen course, and at St. Andrews finished off the long match by twelve up and eleven to play. But though Herd has thus done well in recent match play, it was in score play in 1896 that he seemed so steadily brilliant as to be almost invincible.



A. Herd, at Top of Swing.



A. Herd, at Finish of Swing.

Again and again he won competitions against fields that made the contests virtually, though not nominally, championship battles. In the actual championship itself Herd led for three rounds, and had not a saving shower of rain come on, which put him a little out of his confidence on the keen putting greens, while it gave Taylor a chance of regaining the confidence he had lost, he would in all probability have won the championship too. As it was, his share both in prize-money and in glory in this northern campaign was certainly that of the lion, though the big championship bone did not go his way.

It is quite to the point to name these successes—not for the purpose of retelling a familiar tale, but in order to remind any one who reads this that there is some reason to speak of Herd as a player of remarkable and quite unusual steadiness. At the time that he was playing so grandly, and that Taylor was also at the top of his fame and game, the two used to have many a contest, and though Taylor would seem to be the stronger built man, Herd, I fancy, in spite of his swing rather close in to his body, would commonly out-drive the other. Herd, again, was the better putter. It is hard to find a man to beat Herd on the green, and he crouches down, so as to get on good familiar terms with the ball, in a manner that seems to say that he means business. So if Herd had the better of Taylor in his driving and his putting, it only remained for Taylor to put things even again by his skill in approaching, and this he did time after time, with that wonderful and unrivalled accuracy with his mashie.

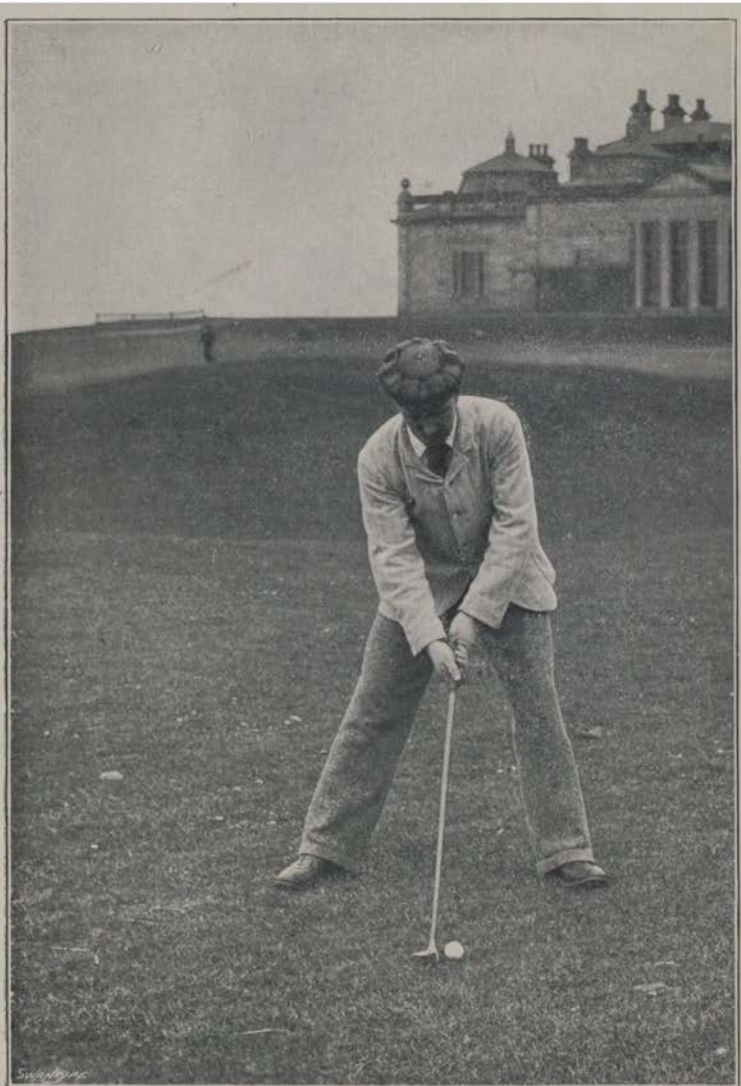
It is always interesting to ask fine golfers their opinion as to how the game should be played; their practice is often so different from their theory. Though we should perhaps choose Herd among the very first as a type of controlled power in his swing, he has no notion that he gives any such impression to the onlooker, for he tells one who asks him that he hits as hard as he can. But we are bound to believe our eyes, and must accept this *cum grano salis*, if with politeness;

it is certain that Herd believes it to be a true account of his methods. Still we retain our own conviction that he might hit harder if he would, though, no doubt, with loss of accuracy.

It is quite apparent, however, although his swing is rather close round his body, so that we do not see that flinging away of the arms after the ball that we admire in the style of some of our drivers, that he does, in point of fact, get a good 'follow-on' nevertheless. If it were not so, his ball could not possibly go the length it does; and we see the manner in which he arrives at this 'follow-on' in the last of the three illustrations of his driving swing. His body is turned very far and freely, and he has straightened himself up on his right leg, which has the knee straight now for the first time throughout the swing. Herd's is rather a crouching address to his ball; his knees are bent all the while, rather after the manner of Andrew Kirkaldy, though when the real business of the swing is begun Herd is a good deal longer. It is this mode of address—close up to the ball, and bending rather over it—that helps to give his style its appearance of compactness and his scores their resulting steadiness. It is harder to see whence he gets his brilliancy and length, but a hint of that secret is revealed to us by the straightened-out right knee after the stroke.

There are, perhaps, few players of whom it is harder to say what is the strong point of their game. Braid's length of drive, Taylor's approach shots, and so on, are worthy of special remark; but of Herd it is not to be said that any one part of his game is conspicuously better than another. He is a fine driver, both in respect of length and straightness, a fine approacher, and a fine putter, but one cannot say that he is specially good in any one of these. The truth is rather that he is equally good in all, and that this all-round excellence is the secret—not nearly so difficult to perceive as to imitate—of his constant success.

There is no finer putter than Herd, and if one were obliged to pick out one department in which his game is



A. Herd, Addressing for Drive.

stronger than any other, it is probably the putting and the short game generally that we should choose. To his putting, as to most of the other business of the game, he crouches closely down, so as to be near his work, and on good terms with the ground and the ball. Mr. Hilton is a firm believer in the man who addresses himself in this way to his putting, and indeed is a firm believer in Herd as a golfer all round. But especially has Mr. Hilton a word of praise for this close and attentive settling down to the putt, declaring that he does not fear on the putting green the man who stands up and puts off his right leg, but him that bends over his work, as if he meant to come to close quarters with it. Herd very fully justifies this opinion, but there is an opinion that we have heard expressed by Herd that his own play does not fully bear out, and that we must take some little exception to. 'In putting,' he says, 'the ball should be struck with a smart tap.' Now, in the opinion of most of our golfing counsellors, 'tap' is the last word that would express the smooth stroke that it seems good to give the ball. However, there the case stands. Herd says you should tap your putts. He is himself a very good putter, yet he is good in virtue of his practice rather than his theory, for we cannot see that he does practically tap his putts in any marked degree. There is another player who holds the same theory, but does not make nearly such good putting practice, and that is Taylor. Taylor, for the immense strength of his all round game, is a poor putter. The chief merit of his game is that he leaves himself so near the hole off his mashie that he seldom has much putting to do. But in this little putting he believes the tap to be the magical kind of stroke; his magic, however, is not always very effective.

But, however we may criticise his theory, there is no mistake about Herd's practice in this business of the short game. He is very deadly, and deadly, we believe, rather in virtue of that good and close settling down to the ball before striking than of any special tapping in the stroke itself. All

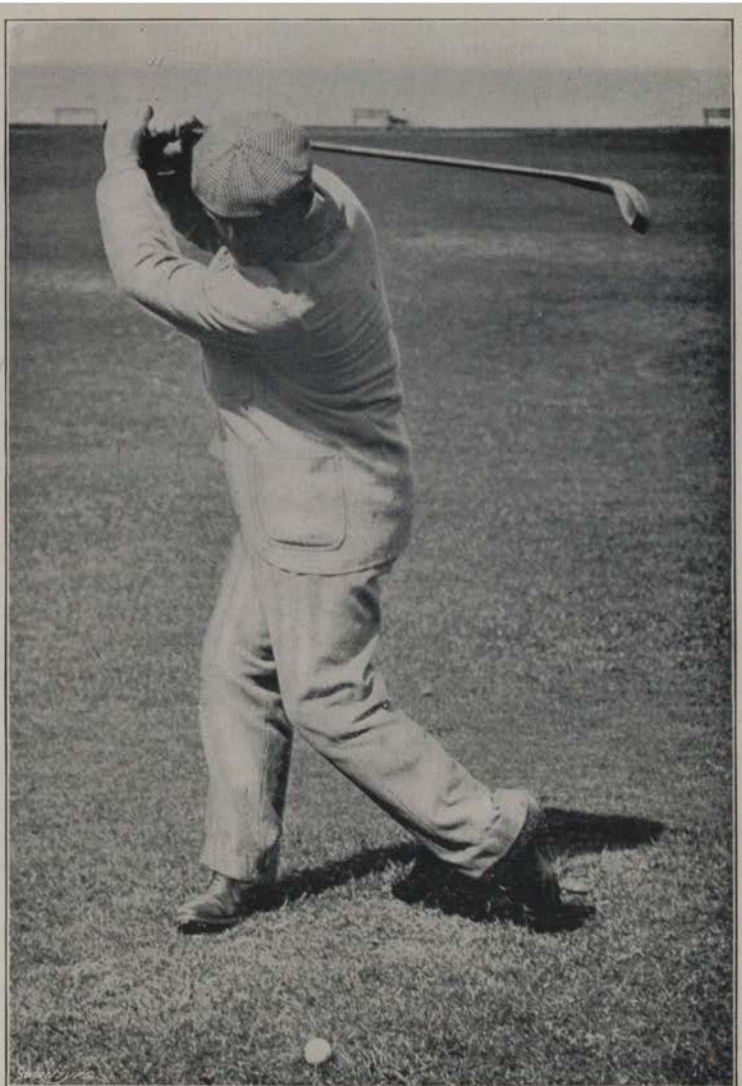
round he is a very grand golfer, and if his chief triumphs have been won in scoring play, he is equally good in match play, and this without any special help from unusual physical strength and length of driving. His fine skill and his fine courage—cheery under the most untoward circumstances—have made him the golfer that he is.

In the last championship, 1898–9, he scarcely did himself justice. Yet on the following day, in a thirty-six hole competition on the St. Nicholas course at Prestwick, he played very finely indeed, with a grand first round of seventy-four; and was only beaten by a single stroke and a single man—the invincible Vardon.

ANDREW KIRKALDY

Andrew Kirkaldy's swing, in action, gives the impression of being such a very quick and short one that many of us, I think, will be surprised to see how far round his head the club actually does come, both before the stroke and after. As exhibited in the photograph—which is, of course, from life—the club is seen at just a little more than the horizontal behind the head. The truth probably is that Kirkaldy's square-built figure makes the swing appear shorter and quicker than it really is, and that the same swing, reproduced by a player of slenderer physique, would appear a deal longer. In any case here is Andrew Kirkaldy's swing as it actually is done, and he is good enough player to make it worth a little attention.

It is to be said, in the first place, that he has the advantage of great physical strength, and a big advantage it is, however much we may talk of the secret of long driving being in accurate, rather than forceful hitting. This is a true saying; but nevertheless there are many men that hit accurately, and of the many equally accurate ones he that combines with his accuracy the greatest strength will drive the longest ball. And again there is a deal of fanciful talk



ANDREW KIRKALDY, AT TOP OF SWING.

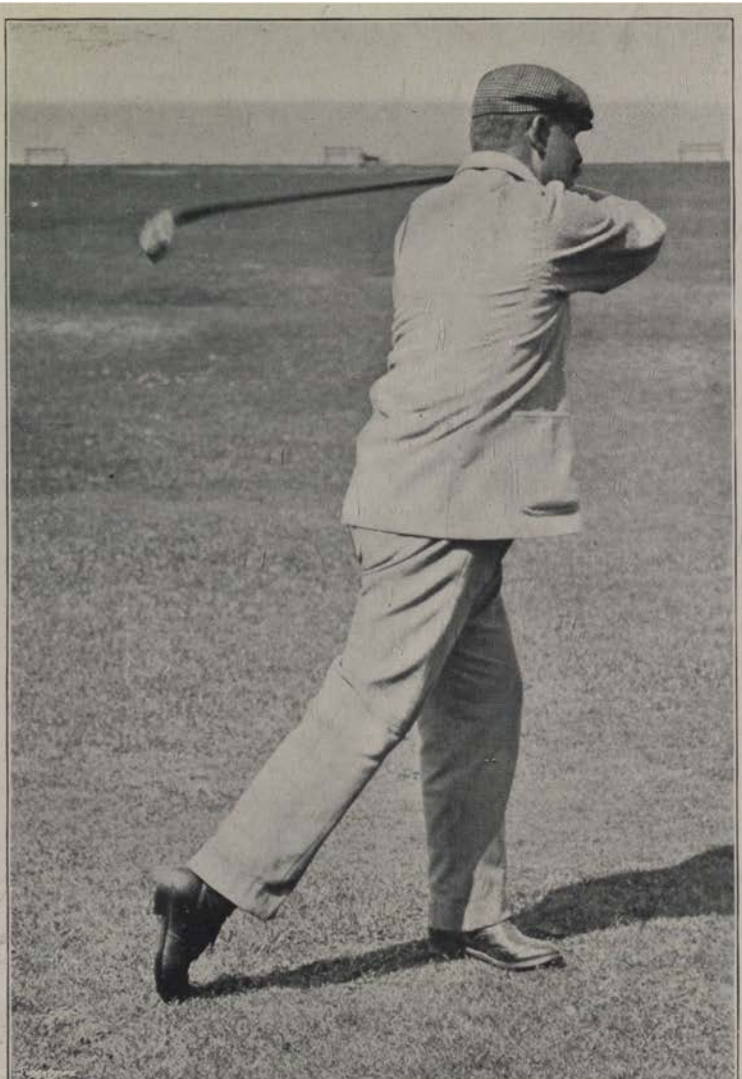
about the value, or valuelessness, of length of driving. We all say that a little additional length of driving makes no difference, but we all have a suspicion, nevertheless, that we do not quite believe what we say. It is like the common saw of the philosopher, that riches do not make for happiness. We subscribe to the theory, but our practice perpetually contradicts it; and so, in spite of what we say about the little utility of length of driving, we make it our constant study to lengthen our own drives. The truth is that length of driving is a double-edged sword; it constantly makes the second stroke easier because shorter, and occasionally saves a stroke by virtue of reaching a hole or carrying a hazard that a shorter shot would have failed to carry or to reach; and again (this is its second edge), it infallibly exercises a certain terrifying effect on an opponent, and this may perhaps be put down, on the average, at the value of about two strokes to our credit during the round. So let us not put too much faith in our own wise sayings about length of driving.

Andrew Kirkaldy is a long driver, he is even a very long driver, though there are a few that are longer. Still, no one will take much advantage of him in this department of the game. He is as long as any man needs to be, and he accomplishes this length of drive with a club that is moderately long in the shaft, but, for a man of his strength, exceedingly light in the head. In his powerful hands it must feel little more than a toy. He chooses this lightness of club deliberately, believing that he thereby gets a longer ball, and indeed it is said to be one of his maxims that 'the lighter the club the longer the ball.' This theory is founded no doubt on the unquestionable truth that length of driving depends principally on the speed with which the club-head is travelling (always supposing its line of travel to be in the right direction) at the moment it meets the ball. But the right direction of travel is an essential, and some folks find it easier to get this important point right—in the simpler golfing

tongue, they can play steadier—with a heavy- than with a light-headed club; and, moreover, it is open to argument whether a certain measure of weight in the head is not an aid, rather than an impediment, to its swift movement. In any case the light head is capable of being made to move swiftly enough and to impart quick enough movement to the ball in the hands of Andrew Kirkaldy.

Kirkaldy's grip of his club is a firm and masterful one, characteristic, as it would seem, of his whole golfing method. There is about his play a deal of forearm push, of muscular power applied to the ball. His stroke gives one the impression less of a swing than of a very forceful push. It would be wrong to describe the stroke as a hit, for the word inevitably suggests a jerky movement, and there is no such fault to be seen in Kirkaldy's sound style. But it is essentially the style of a strong man, of a man who relies on his weight and muscle for the force he applies, rather than on the long swing by which others aim at like results. This is perhaps more plainly seen in his half shots, his long iron approaches, even than in the full drive. I have been again and again surprised when watching him play to the short hole at St. Andrews, to see the very little way that his club came back from the ball in the upward swing. It seemed impossible that with so short a swing sufficient force could be given to the stroke. Yet the loud ring of the ball on the club and the pace at which it started from the face showed evidently enough the power that the player was able to put in in so little space, even without the evidence of the ball's sustained flight through the air, till it landed somewhere in the neighbourhood of the hole—rarely short—for Kirkaldy, if he is anything, is a bold player, and has the courage of his convictions.

His courage and his power of pulling an apparently desperate match out of the fire are familiar to all who have followed the recent course of first-class golf. Quite lately, when he and Herd were practising for the big foursome in



ANDREW KIRKALDY, AT FINISH OF SWING.

which they defeated Archie Simpson and Sayers so handsomely, the former two played a single exhibition match of thirty-six holes. At the end of the first round Kirkaldy was six holes down, but so grandly did he play in the last round that he actually won the match, although Herd's play was not greatly amiss. And this is only a single instance out of many that might be cited in evidence of his tremendous power and courage as a match player. As a score player, considering this power and courage, he has done comparatively ill. It is often said, with a note of exclamation after the remark: 'Andrew Kirkaldy has never won the championship!' And this note of exclamation is the highest testimony to the respect, which is universal, for his play. He has tied for the championship with Willie Fernie, but that was many years ago, and he was beaten in playing the tie off. But he plays every bit as well to-day as ever he did. He is even more feared in match play than ever, and yet no one now ever expects him to be champion. In spite of all his courage, he seems to lack that long-suffering cheerfulness and patience that can alone give a man the heart to last through a long scoring competition without desperate disgust at all 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune' that are certain, sooner or later, to assail him. That, we take it, is the secret of his ill success; it is a question of temperament rather than of eye or muscle.

We have said of Andrew Kirkaldy that his stroke is to be described rather as a forceful push than as a swing, and yet in the second illustration, in which he is seen at the end of the swing (for so we must, of course, for convenience call it), we can infer from the position of the club something of the arc that the club-head described after the ball was hit. It will be seen that the club is very low down on the shoulder—the hands gripping the club must clearly be close down to the shoulder, almost perhaps below the shoulder. In most of our illustrations of the finish of the swing the hands have finished a good deal higher than this. It is

naturally to be inferred that the hands were pushed away rather low after the ball in the follow-on; and this we believe to be actually the case, and also the explanation of the long low ball that Kirkaldy generally drives. It is a most useful shot against the wind, and it is against a wind and across a wind that Kirkaldy's power is best seen. He seems to have the ball under very good control. For the rest he is good throughout the piece; good through the green (no man has finer power of forcing a ball away out of a bad lie), exceptionally good at his long half-shot approaches, sound at his shorter approaches, and a good holer-out. In putting he is one of the comparatively few that sometimes use the old wooden putter; but he is by no means wedded to its use, and seems to have a belief, which many of the best opinions share with him, in changing his putting club.

The bravery that Kirkaldy has shown as a match player he has shown in his profession as a soldier, and he is said to have been one of the first, if not actually the first, into the 'zariba' at Tel-el-Kebir. This is perhaps not strictly a golfing matter, but it is germane to the matter as showing the character of the man, and also as showing that he might be thought to compete at some disadvantage with other golfers, for the greater number of the golfing profession have had no other profession than golf; they have learned the game as boys, they have gone on practising and improving themselves in it, and the club has never grown cold and unfamiliar to their hand. But this has not been Kirkaldy's case. There were years of his life in which he probably never saw a golf club; in which, at all events, the rifle was very much more familiar to his grip, so that he might fairly have been expected to lose something of what he had learned. But if he ever did lose anything the loss is in no way apparent, and he still has quite enough left to satisfy most of the people that play against him.

Mr. F. G. TAIT

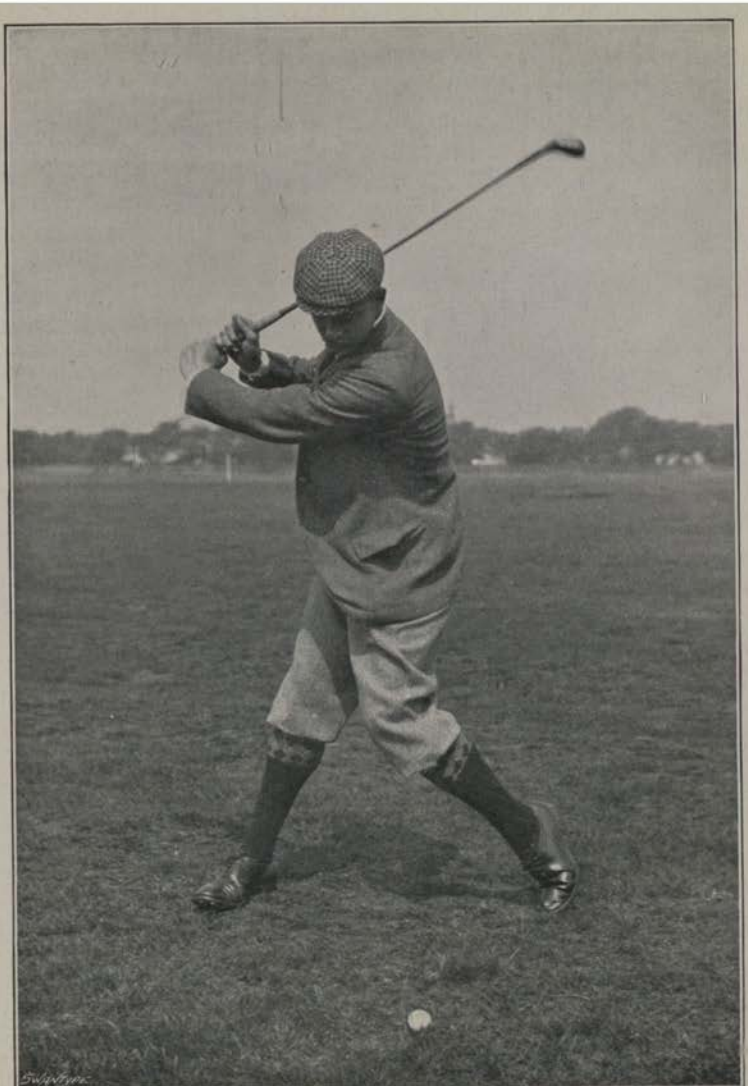
The great feature, as it has always seemed to me, of Mr. Tait's style is the impression that it gives us of keeping a reserve of power beyond what is put into the stroke. One seems to notice this, not only with his driving, but also in his approach strokes—he appears to swing the club quietly down on the ball, without any hurry or forcing.

I have written that this has 'always' seemed to me the feature of his game. I ought to take that adverb back, for there was a time when Mr. Tait was just emerging from boyhood, at which his great ambition seemed to be to drive all the holes at St. Andrews in one. He used to drive a very long way in those days—further, probably, than he drives now—but he was not nearly so good a player. And in those days one certainly could not have said that power held in reserve was distinctive of his game. Every inch of power that he had, and he had a great deal, was put into the stroke. He has more power, no doubt, now, but he uses it a deal more economically. Possibly it is in great measure because he has so much power that he is able to use only a portion of it and yet get a longer ball than most, and it may be that only by using all the power that he possesses can an average man put himself on terms with Mr. Tait's driving. And if this is true, it may further be that it would not do for the average man to imitate this characteristic feature of Mr. Tait's style. At the same time, it is so certain that to hit the ball truly is infinitely more important than to hit it hard that probably even much weaker brethren would do well to imitate the 'control' of Mr. Tait's swing.

This consideration, however, at once raises a further question; and in the same connection it is interesting to notice a remark made by Mr. Tait (I have it by report, not from himself) that in his opinion a longer and a heavier club than that which is the latest fashion is the better weapon,

because with the heavier club you can get the same length of ball with less hard hitting. Let us take that as a truth, so far as it goes—namely, that long and heavy clubs will drive further than light ones—though even this is disputed. Andrew Kirkaldy is reported to have pronounced the dictum that 'the lighter the club the longer the stroke.' But, accepting Mr. Tait's contrary view, it still raises a further point, which he has tacitly assumed—namely, that it is easier to hit truly when hitting gently than when hitting hard. Mr. Tait's whole performance in the golfing swing is evidence to his own belief in this theory, and it is also convincing testimony of its truth so far as he is personally concerned. He plays with much greater accuracy in these days of his relatively gentle hitting than in the hard-hitting days of his early youth. But every good golfer is not of his opinion. Some hold the theory that you should hit as hard as you can, and that it is more difficult to hit truly when you hit with some force consciously held in reserve. Of course even these people would tell you that the theory of the famous 'Don't press' is good—especially good for the learners—but their rendering and interpretation of the theory differs from that of others. Every one is agreed that you must not hit with wild force, that you must control the stroke so as to keep your aim accurate; only, some will say that up to a certain point it is easier to control the aim when you hit hard. The question is not one that admits a dogmatic answer. One method may be the better for one man, and another may suit another man better; but it is worth while noticing Mr. Tait's view of it and the manner in which his style gives practical expression of that view.

It will be seen that Mr. Tait's swing is not remarkably long. The club does not go very far back, nor is the turning of the body very much emphasised. But, on the other hand, his foot action is remarkably free, quick, and good. In the Badminton book on golf, the praise that Mr. Lyttelton in his chapter on 'batting,' in the cricket volume,



MR. F. G. TAIT, AT TOP OF SWING.

gives to a quick-footed batsman was noticed, and it was expressly said that such a phrase would be anything but praise of a driver at golf. What was there meant was that the trick of some golfers, generally not of the most efficient class, of moving their feet—shifting their foothold—at the moment of striking the ball was not to be commended. In another sense, however, quick and correct foot action is good in a golfer, and fine instances of it are shown in the styles both of Mr. Tait and of Mr. Arnold Blyth. In the latter it has perhaps its more perfect expression, but Mr. Tait's style shows it finely too.

We have said that the chief feature of Mr. Tait's swing is the impression of controlled power that it gives; but the characteristic—accidental, and not part of the swing proper, of course—that the casual observer will first notice in his play is that he tries over, before addressing himself to the ball, almost every single stroke that he plays in the course of a long day's golf. Very likely it is a help; certainly, Mr. Tait must conceive that it is so.

For a player who first came into notice rather as a long driver than anything else, he is remarkably good with all his clubs. We cannot say that he is noticeably better in his driving, his approaching, or his putting. He is good in them all, and there is no weak spot in his game. His fine performances are too many to chronicle. Perhaps he has shown his best form in matches against professionals, to whom he must be a real terror. The best actual win that he has put on record was his victory in the amateur championship of 1897, at Sandwich, when he beat Mr. Hilton in the final by a large balance of holes. Just previously he had won the St. George's Challenge Vase against a very strong field. But no less praiseworthy, though less conspicuous, have been his scores in three consecutive open championships. At Muirfield, when Harry Vardon won, after a tie with Taylor, Mr. Tait entered the last round with a good chance of victory; and at Hoylake, in the following year,

when Mr. Hilton gained the championship, he played the most steadily good golf of any, and was third, after Mr. Hilton and Braid. At Prestwick, in 1898, when again Harry Vardon was the victor, Mr. Tait was still a force to be reckoned with when only one round remained for play; but a lamentable disaster in the famous, or infamous, bunker called the 'Cardinal's Nob' cost him eight strokes for that hole and practically put him out of the running. Mr. Tait is amateur champion at the moment of writing, in 1898; but I do not rate that—neither, I think, will he—on the same level as his win of the same honour two years before, nor as his very fine, though in no case quite victorious, work in the last three open championships. Mr. Tait won, but he was distinctly lucky to get through his semi-final tie with Mr. Low and the previous tie with Mr. Graham. In neither of these matches did he play in his own true form, nor in the form that he showed in the championship tournament of 1896. But there is a point about Mr. Tait's luck that is worth some consideration—his luck seems constantly attending him, which almost seems to be the same as saying that really it is not rightly called luck at all. And yet we have far to go to find another name for it. Thrice, to my knowledge, has Mr. Tait holed long putts, putts so long as to be really lucky, at the last hole in big competitions—once to win the St. Andrews medal, once to tie with Mr. Edward Blackwell in a tournament which Mr. Tait ultimately won, and once to beat Mr. Mure Fergusson for the St. George's Vase at Sandwich. All these were putts of fifteen yards or so, and these are just a little too long not to be just a little lucky. Moreover, Mr. Tait has a terrible habit, after making a bad stroke, of laying the next close up alongside the hole and holing out. From sixty yards or so he holes out in two perhaps more often than not, playing the ball up, not with a deal of cut, as Taylor plays it, but half running and half lofted, so that it flies low and runs up.

Now all this is in the nature of luck—it is lucky—but there

are some sterling qualities behind it all to make the luck possible. But for the qualities Mr. Tait would not have the luck. And the qualities are chiefly mental and moral. These lucky putts, and so on, mean that Mr. Tait, after making a bad stroke, or when to all appearances the case is desperate, does not permit himself to despair. He works his hardest still, does not give up, or play carelessly. He tries his best, and now and again the good effort has its unexpectedly good result.

Mr. Tait's is a quiet swing in driving, a swing apparently under very good control; but for all that it has all the look of a long swing. Any one setting to work to imitate it without special study would be almost certain to bring the club quite as far round as the horizontal, and probably would let it go even further back, behind the head. A glance at the first of the accompanying pictures, showing Mr. Tait at the top of the driving swing, will prove at once the mistake that such an imitator would make, and at the same time prove how very short in the upward swing Mr. Tait's driving stroke actually is. His club is at no more than an angle of forty-five degrees, probably the shortest back swing of all those that we shall have occasion to study. And yet the swing looks long. Somewhere in this there is a mystery, and the key to the mystery is no doubt to be found in the second illustration, showing Mr. Tait at the finish of his drive. It is a very fine, almost an ideal, finish. The club has not come very far back over the shoulder again—not down over the back, after the manner of the finish of Mr. Boothby's drive—but its position shows clearly how very well the arms have followed out after the ball after it was struck, and all this following on has been helped by the leaning forward of the body, with the weight all thrown on the left leg, the right foot being well away, up and off the ground, to make all this movement possible. Add to this that Mr. Tait has let his right shoulder come very far round, and none of the qualities of a fine finish are wanting. Especially to be noted is the comparative straight-

ness of Mr. Tait's arms—the very slight crook of the elbow as compared with the position of the arms in most of these photographs of the finish of the swing.

Finally, Mr. Tait's 'control' is shown again by the patience with which his hands wait for the club-head to come down right to the ball before they go out after it. It is difficult to put into words this good quality of Mr. Tait's driving style, in virtue of which he is able to wait for the club to come to the ball, so that he gets behind the ball, as it were, and puts the driving power well in after it. We have seen that it is the manner of most fine players to have eye, hands, and ball pretty much in the same line when they address themselves to the full driving stroke. In the address of some—as, for instance, of Mr. Arnold Blyth—we see the hands advanced in front of the line passing from ball to eye, much in the manner of address affected by most when they are preparing to drive a low ball in the wind's teeth. But whatever the manner of the address in this particular, it is almost certain that the club, ball, and eye ought to be in the same positions, relatively to each other, at the moment that the club hits the ball as they were at the moment of the address. It is only this assumption that makes all our trouble in addressing the ball worth its while. If we may not make this assumption we take away all sense and purpose from the address. Few of us, unfortunately, are able to act up to the assumption with any consistency. Most of us are apt to hurry the stroke, to get away our hands in front of the club-head, so that, having addressed the ball in orthodox fashion, we yet constantly hit it with hands advanced as in the manner of Mr. Arnold Blyth's address.

This discrepancy between the stroke and the style of address is probably very much more common than we suppose, and probably an unsuspected source of many inaccuracies. But it is a discrepancy scarcely to be seen in Mr. Tait's play. We know no golfer who, consciously or un-

Mr. J. Graham, at Top of Drive.

consciously, seems more studiously to avoid the mistake and all its fatal consequences, and probably by a fuller appreciation of its evils, and a note of Mr. Tait's 'control,' we too may help ourselves to conquer the tendency, and may learn something of his patience.

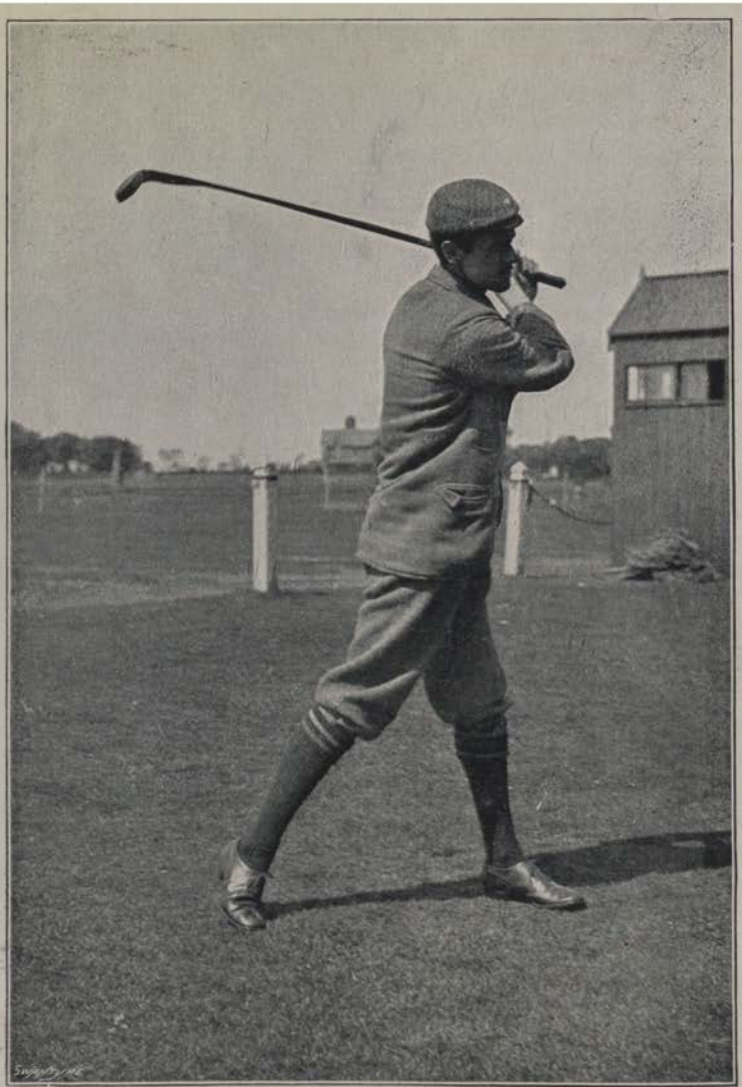
Mr. J. GRAHAM

Again and again, in looking over this gallery of golfing portraits, I have been struck by the utterly wrong notion that I formed in my own mind with regard to the style of swing of various golfers whom I had seen play and whom I had played with many times and for many years. It was rather an interesting discovery, though rather a humiliating one, but there is the satisfaction of thinking that if it is possible for oneself to be so mistaken, it is not very much less possible that others may be equally mistaken, and that so they may find an equal interest in those mistakes. The meaning of all which is, in the first place, that I have discovered Mr. Graham's swing to be a very, very great deal shorter in the upward stroke than I had imagined it to be. The photograph does not lie. These photographs, I may be allowed to mention, are taken at the rate of a 200th part of a second, and it is not easy to deceive so quick an eye as this. Of course the facial likenesses are not as striking as if the people had stood for five minutes, with their necks in the stocks, gazing into the camera; but in that case the movements of the swing would show more constraint. I only wish these golfers had been cricketers as to their costume. Given a man dressed all over in white, the problem of photography is reduced to elemental simplicity. In the meantime, however, we must take what we can get, and the results—as the writer may freely say, seeing that he is not the photographer—are 'no that bad.'

Mr. Graham's swing, then, it is very apparent, is a very short one, as far, at least, as the upward half of it goes.

There is only one other of the personages of this picture gallery who is content with so short an up-lift of the club. That other is a very notable player, Mr. F. G. Tait, and he, like Mr. Graham, is a long driver. It is said at Hoylake that Mr. Graham is the longest driver on the course, and the Hoylake people ought to know. The writer, for his part, can but say that, following in the wake of a four-ball match played just before the amateur championship meeting of 1898, in which the players were Mr. Tait and Mr. Graham on the one side against Mr. Hilton and Mr. Ball on the other, the driving of Mr. Tait, Mr. Ball, and Mr. Graham was so singularly level that time after time a tablecloth would almost have covered all the three balls after the tee shot, while Mr. Hilton, then open champion, was just a little behind. But one ought to watch players day after day and week after week before giving a dogmatic verdict on their relative driving. It is a point in which men differ from day to day, the same man sometimes driving twenty yards further throughout the one day than he did the day before, though to all appearance hitting the ball no better and no worse. So it is wiser to accept the secondhand opinion of those who have seen more, and to acquiesce in their view that Mr. Graham is the longest driver at Hoylake, where the standard of driving is not set particularly low.

And yet, if he is the longest driver, he is probably the shortest swinger of all the first-class ones, on the up-stroke at all events. An angle of forty-five degrees seems the limit that his club reaches behind the head; it seems as if it were necessary for us to revise the canons of the long-driving art, since we see the things that are done by Mr. Tait and Mr. Graham and the way in which they do them.. It is to be noted, too, as a remarkable point about Mr. Graham's style, that he has the ball unusually far back, just about opposite the right foot. In other respects his attitude is extremely like that of Mr. Tait (q.v.), but in this particular it is widely different. The ball, when Mr. Tait is proposing



Mr. J. Graham, at Finish of Swing.

to strike it, is nearly opposite the left foot. Also there is this comparative merit in Mr. Tait's style, that his arms are straighter than Mr. Graham's, the hands further away from the body. He has also a freer movement of the left knee and foot. On the whole we are bound to admit a certain suggestion of constraint about Mr. Graham's attitude at the top of the swing; the best thing that we can say for it is that it gives the notion of a very well-knit, concentrated action. We can conceive that it would bring down the club very much according to the desire of the striker, so far as the accuracy of the club is concerned. What we should scarcely have foreseen is that it should put such power into the stroke.

The second illustration—that which shows the stroke at the finish—gives us something of the explanation of this power, but does not fully explain it. We see here that Mr. Graham, taking into consideration the rather constrained position that we caught him in at the top of the swing, has swung out with a deal more freedom than that position could have led us to expect. His arms have come round and back again over his shoulder, they are less finely stretched out than Mr. Tait's at the finish, but the body has come well forward for the follow-on; the weight is thrown strongly on the left leg, the right heel is raised and turned to help the action. All this is good, but it does not fully explain the secret of Mr. Graham's power. That we may be able to find explained in an account that he himself gives of his methods rather than in anything that even the swiftest photographic snap-shot can show us. He affirms that he tightens the grip of the right hand as the club-head gets to the ball, and puts in most of the force by that means.

It is impossible not to believe that this is a correct account. It is true that there is no matter on this earth about which men are more apt to deceive themselves than this matter of the methods by which they achieve the ever-to-be-desired end of hitting the golf-ball. Human methods with the golf club seem even more elusive from the search of

introspection than human motives, so that by holding up the glass to golfing nature, as we are doing by the exhibition of this portrait gallery, we are really laying ourselves within perilous hazard of libel action. Still, if the photographer can act as the god, to make folks see themselves as others see them, we are surely entitled to take full advantage of his power, and put the dots upon the doubtful 'i's.'

Mr. Graham, we believe, however, does not deceive himself one bit in thinking that he takes a good grip with his right hand, and therewith hits the ball a good forceful blow as the club-face comes to it. We do not see how else he is to do it with his peculiar stand, and the ball so far back opposite the right foot. If a man, with the ball so far back as this, is to get properly behind it with his club, so as to hit it a strong straightforward blow, it seems inevitable that he must do most of the hitting with the right hand, with his weight resting on the right leg at the moment of striking, and with the hands far back at that moment, nearly opposite the right thigh. This, according to our observation, is the method of Mr. Graham's driving, and this is also his method according to the inference we should naturally draw from his position at the top of the swing.

It is chiefly in private matches, so far, that Mr. Graham has proved his worth as a golfer. In big competitions he has not had any great luck—he is not yet old enough to have taken part in many of them—and it needs a bit of luck to win a big competition. But both Mr. Ball and Mr. Hilton know him well on the links of Hoylake, and neither claims to be able to give him a single stroke. In the four-ball match spoken of above Mr. Tait and Mr. Graham gave Mr. Ball and Mr. Hilton a seriously heavy beating, both the victors playing remarkably fine golf. But two days later Mr. Graham, in the antepenultimate round of the amateur championship, let himself be beaten, quite unnecessarily, by Mr. F. G. Tait, neither playing up to the mark, and Mr. Graham in particular missing some very short putts.

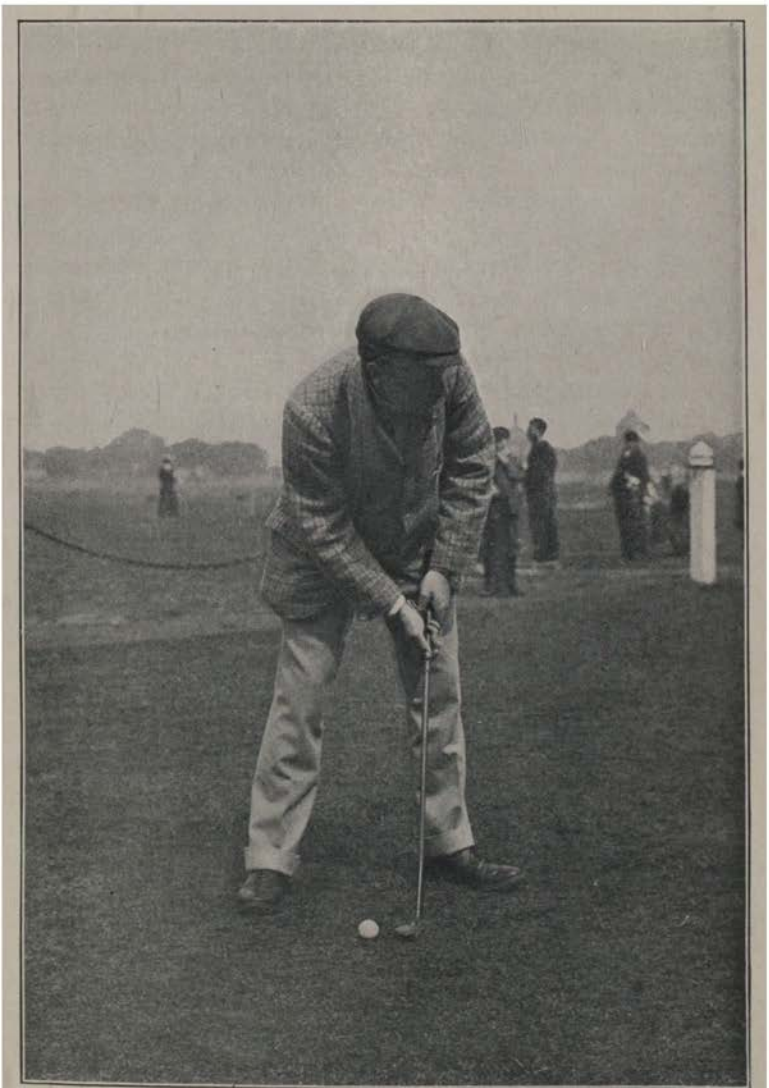
Two years before, at Sandwich, he worked his way into the semi-final round of the same tournament; then he met Mr. Hilton, and was beaten. So Mr. Graham has done well, but his power gives him the right to expect to do better. And no doubt he will do better. He is an especially fine driver, hitting a nice low ball, but he is good all through, with all his clubs, and has an even temper and sound nerve that ought to help him to make the most of his good gifts of eye and muscle.

Mr. J. L. LOW

In the mind of a good many of us who have watched the course of first-class golf during the last few years, the name of Mr. Low is associated with some very hard treatment. Luck is supposed to come all even in the long run; but in that case there must be a very good time coming for Mr. Low, to make up to him for past ill-usage. It is especially in the amateur championship tournaments that he has been so badly treated. Two years in succession have seen him in the semi-final tie, and each of these years he has been beaten, after a halved match, in spite of playing distinctly the better and steadier golf in the extra holes. In 1897, the semi-finalist that put him out was Mr. Robb—himself afterwards beaten by the late Dr. Allan—and in 1898 Mr. Low was defeated by the amateur champion of that year, Mr. F. G. Tait. In each case the round of eighteen holes had been halved. In Mr. Tait's case it was only a prodigious recovery at the sixteenth hole at Hoylake that enabled him to get a half of the match; and in both cases Mr. Low had hard lines not to win on the extra holes. At the twentieth hole he 'had Freddie a regular sitter,' as the situation was commonly expressed by the spectators, for Mr. Tait had to hole a nasty six yard putt to tie; and at the next hole Mr. Tait drove out of bounds, and again it looked any odds on Mr. Low. But again the former recovered brilliantly, and

Mr. Low, playing the hole faultlessly, only halved it. At the next hole Mr. Tait won. Against Mr. Robb, in the final hole of their match, Mr. Low drove a straight shot, Mr. Robb hit the wall—it was at Muirfield. Bounding off the wall the latter had a good lie whence he could reach the green, while Mr. Low, in the middle of the course, lay in an iron-skelp, and had to take his iron, with the result of loss of hole and loss of championship.

Of course this matter of Mr. Low's bad luck has an historical and personal interest, but no more; the interest in finding out how he arrived at so honourable a position as semi-finalist two years in succession is more general. It is a position that he gained by the combination of a variety of good golfing gifts; not the least useful being a light-hearted and brave temperament, that is ignorant of 'funk' or nerves. On the muscular side there is straightness and fair length of driving and some accurate approach play to Mr. Low's credit, but the factor that is biggest in making the sum of Mr. Low's success is undoubtedly his putting. He is so good a putter that we cannot, for the moment, name a better, and it is a point especially to be noted that he putts with a wooden putter. This is a weapon that was universal for the short game twenty years ago. One hardly ever sees the club to-day; we all putt with irons. Perhaps we putt better, perhaps not. It seems easier to see the correct line off the face of the iron putter; the iron blade seems to give the more definite base line on which to erect our imaginary perpendicular than the wooden putter. But, for all that, it is a significant fact that some of the very best putters are those who stick to the old wooden weapons. About the value of the wooden putter for running a long putt up to the hole there can be no doubt; we can all do that part of the business better with wood than with iron. But it is the short putts that bother most of us when we take the wood to them. They do not bother Mr. Low, however, nor several of those very excellent putters that putt with the wood; and if Mr.



MR. J. L. LOW, PUTTING.

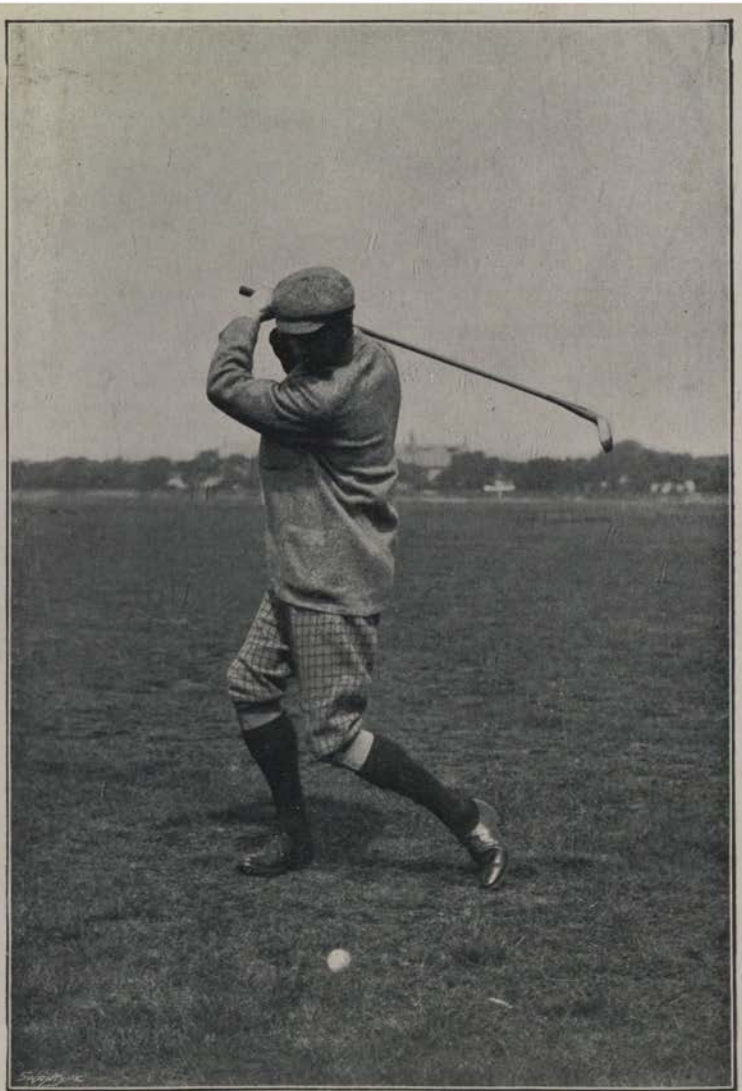
Low continues putting, and putting so well, with his wooden putter, it is more than likely that he will produce a reaction, and that we shall see the wooden putter winning its way into favour again. In the meantime there are also very many men—the amateur champion, Mr. F. G. Tait, notably—who are uncommonly good with the iron putter; so perhaps there is more in the method than in the instrument.

And in the method as exhibited by Mr. Low there is something very noteworthy, and the more noteworthy because it is exhibited by other fine putters with the wooden instrument also, and this is that they all seem to draw the club very far back away from the ball before striking, and to strike the ball a very free blow. Another very good putter indeed, though he is not a first-class player, who has this peculiarity is Mr. Linskill, who did so very much to help the Cambridge University Golf Club in the days of its infancy. A third was Jamie Allan, who in his best day was as fine a player with all his clubs as ever played golf. All these seemed to use the wrists a great deal in the stroke with the wooden putter. In Mr. Low's putts, the ball seems to be hit so hard and freely that it must inevitably go far beyond the hole, but though he is as bold a putter as he is accurate, and always gives the ball a chance, he seldom runs it out of holing; indeed, no man is better at that important detail of the game—laying the long putt dead.

There is a very good point about Mr. Low's putting—that he does not dwell very long on his aim. In every putt it seems as if there was one psychological moment at which we might be able to hole it—a moment in which we seem to see the right line, and to have every confidence in our ability to hole the putt. That is the condition of affairs when we are putting well; when hand and eye are working in happy harmony. In other cases the psychological moment never comes. We wait for it in vain. But perhaps to most of us it comes sooner, rather than later, if it is to come at all, so that waiting on is not likely to do much good. Generally it

is the first sight of the line that is the useful one; and if we settle down too long over our putts, dreaming over them, and, as it were, getting 'broody' over them, like a hen inclined to sit, we are apt to overstay that psychological moment, and never to chance on it again. Then we putt feebly, without decision or purpose, and the end is despair. Mr. Low never gives himself a chance of this. He does not get 'broody' over his putts. He studies the putt well from behind the ball, and when he has satisfied himself of the proper line from ball to hole he goes up to his putt, takes a final glance at the hole, lays the putter to the ball and putts quickly—and with deadly effect. Perhaps this quickness is part of the secret of his success, but I expect that his good nerve and good eye have more to do with it. At the same time, if a man be inclined to be nervous, there is no doubt that a continued dwelling over the putt gives time and opportunity for all the demons of doubt and irresolution to assail his soul—a review of the dreadful consequences of the prospective miss looms large between his eye and the ball, and obscures the clear view that the one should take of the other; and the shorter the time that can be given for these nightmares to take shape the better. Therefore we believe that there is wisdom in Mr. Low's method, a wisdom that is fully justified of all the progeny of well-played putts that she produces. It is not while we are studying the line from ball to hole, or again from hole to ball—as Park so wishes us to do—that these ghosts throng in upon us to frighten us. All that is good business. We are wishing all the time to find out the lie of the ground and the line of the putt—there is then no space in our fully occupied minds for the ghosts to slip in. But it is after we have begun to address ourselves to the ball and are standing over it that we begin to think of all manner of things in heaven and earth.

Why we sometimes delay so long before striking we should often be puzzled to say. It is not that we are reconsidering the line, or the strength, or are occupied in any useful



MR. C. E. DICK, AT TOP OF SWING.

calculation. Rather it seems to be that we have fallen into the habit of thinking that a decent interval must elapse between our address to the ball and our striking of it—that it is, as it were, disrespectful to the putt to play it without standing in the attitude of address for the canonical length of time. We cannot say why we delay so long; but the effect, no doubt, is to make us miss many an easy putt. The only consolation is in the reflection that it has probably caused our opponents, in their natural exasperation at our delays, to miss quite as many; but Mr. Low's speedier methods are the better ones, both for oneself and partner.

Mr. C. E. DICK

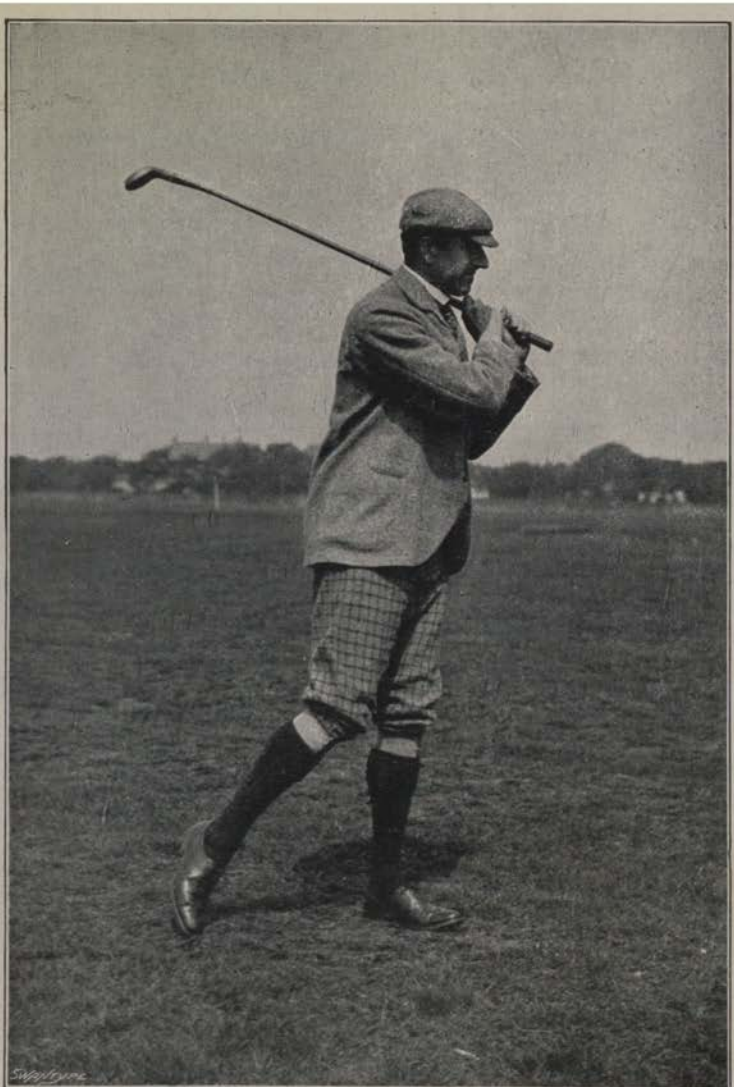
As a general rule, in his remarks on the subjects of this golfing picture gallery, the showman has found himself obliged to confess surprise at finding the swings of some of his golfers shorter than they had appeared to be. Andrew Kirkaldy, however, is a notable instance of a player whose club is shown to go back further than most of us would have expected to see it go, and another striking instance of a similar delusion is before us in this portrait of Mr. Dick. The writer, at all events, had always been under the impression that Mr. Dick had quite a short swing; and yet—regard it—longer by nearly a right angle than the swing of Mr. Tait or Mr. Graham—that is to say, so far as the first half, the upward stroke, of it is concerned!

Mr. Dick's power as a golfer is perhaps best known on the links of Hoylake, where he has played very consistently for many years; but later he has been playing a good deal at Troon, and has there proved himself a worthy opponent even for Willie Fernie. He has been extraordinarily unfortunate in competitions at Hoylake, being beaten for first place four times in succession, as I believe, by Mr. Hilton, and on each occasion by a single stroke. It looks as if there was some-

thing wrong in this—as if the scales of justice had become just a little unhinged at the joint. Still Mr. Dick has done quite well enough, both in these competitions and in private matches, to leave the golfing world in no manner of doubt about his power.

It is seen at once that Mr. Dick's style is an unusual one. In the upward stroke, with the club at the top of the swing—where it appears, much to the writer's surprise, to come down below the horizontal line—Mr. Dick bends the right knee a deal more than most of our first-class golfers, and perhaps just a little more than any other of them. At the same time the left knee also is allowed to come unusually far down, and the left heel is very far up away from the ground. Withal, the body has turned freely on the hips and the left shoulder has come far down and round. None, in fact, of what we may call the 'encouragements' to a long swing are lacking in this instance, and the conclusion of the matter is therefore that we are rather at a loss to conceive how Mr. Dick's swing can ever have impressed us with the notion that it was a short one. The explanation is again perhaps to be sought in the second illustration, that shows us Mr. Dick's attitude at the finish of the stroke. It is an attitude that is easy, even to *nonchalance*. The body has turned just slightly at the hips, the right heel is well away from the ground, but the right knee is bent—not straightened up to push the body forward for the follow-on, as in many other cases—the right shoulder has come round but a very little, the arms are greatly bent.

In previous studies, as of Mr. Tait and Mr. Graham, we were surprised by the shortness of the upward swing. Either of these players we should have said to possess a long swing, yet we find them both very much shorter on the up stroke than Mr. Dick. It seems that in every case we have found out the explanation of our mistakes by looking at the illustrations which showed these players at the end of their respective strokes, and this consideration suggests a further conclusion of a general nature, that we are almost com-



Mr. C. E. Dick, at Finish of Drive.

pelled to adopt — namely, that we derive our notions with regard to the length of a golfer's swing very much more from what he does after he has struck the ball than before he has struck it, from the finish rather than the beginning of the swing, from the follow-on rather than the up stroke. This is the conclusion at which I am forced to arrive with regard to my own judgment of different golfers' swings; and it has come as a surprise to me. I think it not impossible that it will come as a surprise to other golfers also. Hitherto I had always supposed, when I said that such and such a golfer's swing was long, that I meant to say that he brought the club a long way round his head and down behind his back on the up stroke; and that, I believe, is the sense in which most golfers use the word 'long' of a swing. But by the medium of these two hundred times quicker than instantaneous photographs, it is revealed to me that the impression of length is given very much more by the finish than by the up stroke of the swing; and altogether this golfing swing has revealed itself as very much more a matter of the finish than I had supposed that it would prove. It is a useful conclusion to have reached, and the practical inference that we should draw from it is that the more we shorten the first part, the up stroke, of our swing perhaps the better, but the more we shorten the finish, the worse.

And yet even thus far it does not do to be dogmatic. The instance before us—the portrait of Mr. Dick—seems to show a shortish finish. It does not give us the impression of a stroke carried out very far after the ball; and yet it would not be easy to name a steadier driver than Mr. Dick, or one that gets a longer ball without much apparent effort. In the quiet easy attitude of Mr. Dick's finish there is indeed a suggestion of that ease which is so admirable in his stroke, but it is evident that we must not fall into the extreme error of judging every swing by its finish only, or we should never find in Mr. Dick's style a suggestion of that power of long driving that he possesses. He has a special faculty of getting

away a long low ball that runs far after the pitch—a style of ball, it may be said, that is especially useful on the long flats of Hoylake—and with his length he combines more than the average of straightness.

Altogether, therefore, it is just a little difficult to find out why Mr. Dick has not done more than he has done in big competitions. He is capable of much. But the initial success always seems to require a little luck to assist in its achievement; after the initial success the confidence thereby won quickly leads to further success, and perhaps this little luck, the initial success, has still to come to Mr. Dick. But he has plenty of time before him and plenty of golfing ability.

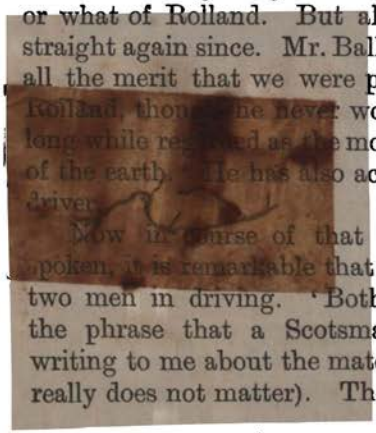
Mr. JOHN BALL

The name of Mr. John Ball ought to be an inspiring one to write about. Just at the moment of writing it appears that he is not, for the time being, on his best game, but he has no need to do more than he has done to fill perhaps the biggest place in the golfing eye—even Mr. Hilton, twice open champion, not excepted. Mr. Ball has been amateur champion four times, and no other man has been amateur champion more than twice. He has also won the open championship, and though he has won it once only, while Mr. Hilton has won it twice, he was the first of the amateurs to win it; the first to break the spell of professional invincibility; the first to raise amateur golf to higher pretensions.

For a great many years of his golfing career Mr. John Ball was a disappointment—both to his friends and to himself. He played extraordinarily well at Hoylake, went round in wonderful scores, beat any one that dared to play him; but when he went away from this, his native heath, he always failed to do himself anything like justice; so that after a while it began to be said of him that he could not

play anywhere but at Hoylake, and a good many of the Scotsmen were inclined to doubt whether he really were anything like the player he was reputed to be. Possibly it was Mr. Ball's modesty that prevented him from doing better abroad. It was a long while before he seemed to have a belief and a confidence in himself. But when he came into possession of his confidence he was a terrible player.

His first big match abroad, so far as I can remember, was with Douglas Rolland. It was a home and home affair—at Elie and Hoylake. Rolland played as an amateur in those days, and we in England had an idea that 'Johnnie,' if he played his game, could beat any amateur. Only we had some small doubt of his playing his game. In the event he got badly beaten. Perhaps he did not quite play up to the mark, and certainly at Hoylake he was below his own best mark. But then we did not know, in those days, what Rolland was. Another thing that we did not know then was what amateurs could do; it was Mr. Ball that first taught us that an amateur could win the open championship, and when all that there was to tell us was that Mr. Ball had been beaten in a home and home match by a comparatively unknown Scottish amateur, we did not quite know what had become of our golfing standards, or what to think of Mr. Ball or what of Rolland. But all that has been put more than straight again since. Mr. Ball has much more than vindicated all the merit that we were prepared to ascribe to him, and Rolland, though he never won the championship, was for a long while regarded as the most formidable player on the face of the earth. He has also acquired the fame of an enormous driver.



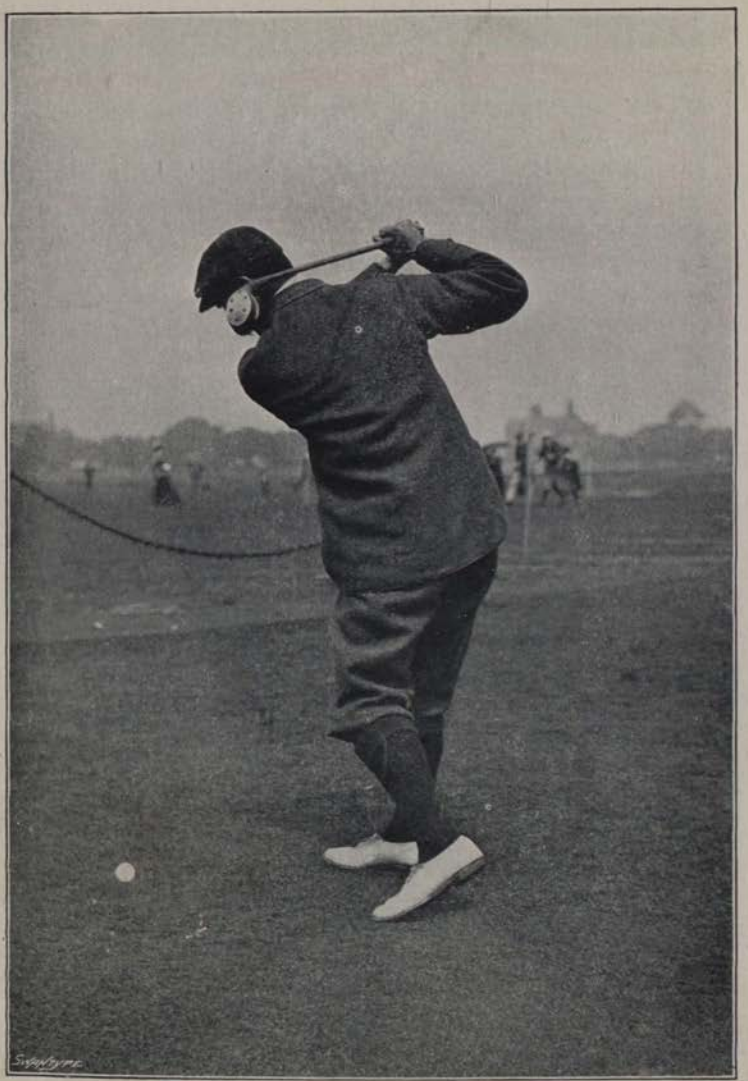
Now in the course of that match of which we have just spoken, it is remarkable that there was nothing between the two men in driving. 'Both men drove like clockwork,' is the phrase that a Scotsman, an excellent judge, used in writing to me about the match at Elie (or was it Leven?—it really does not matter). The point that is interesting is that

in those days Mr. Ball was driving as far as Rolland. Perhaps Rolland grew a little longer, later; but certainly Mr. Ball has grown shorter. He is not an out-of-the-way long driver now, by any means. But he used to be; he used to have an enormous carry. It is true that his ordinary ball never had on it much run. A low ball at the start, rising a little at the finish, and falling dead, was the ball that was characteristic of him—a beautiful ball to see driven up, hole-high, to a green. Against the wind he could hit a long low ball, with a bit of pull at the finish, that was wonderfully paying; but the other was his normal style of ball. Also he would drive an enormous ball with a cleek, a club that I believe he never uses now.

It is the present writer's opinion that Mr. Ball's driving was the prettiest sight that golf had to give a man. I have never seen a player whose hitting was such a pleasure to watch, such a beautiful exhibition of grace and power, showing such ability to concentrate in a moment, and on a spot, all the muscular power that a human frame was master of. It was a beautiful sight.

Every critic does not agree in this eulogy. There are those who are so offended by Mr. Ball's grip of his right hand, reaching right away under the club-handle, that they will allow no beauty at all in his style. It is a matter of taste. Possibly Mr. Ball's driving, as a thing of artistic beauty, might be worthy of even higher praise if he did not reach down, in his own manner, with his right hand. But, taking it as it is, with all possible drawbacks, it commends itself to most golfers, as to the writer, as the most perfect exhibition of the drive ever seen.

A deal of this grace and power is suggested in the portraits that excuse this notice. In the first illustration, showing Mr. Ball at the top of his swing, it is impossible to find any point at which there is the slightest appearance of constraint, or the slightest evidence of effort more than is necessary; nor are there 'compensations' in the swing, as we have seen in



Mr. John Ball, at Top of Swing.

the case of others, where one joint, by an extra effort, is making up for a little idleness or lack of exertion on the part of another. All, according to the writer's judgment, is very perfect—all, that is, except perhaps that we might like to see the club less firmly gripped home in that right fist; but this, where the rest is so excellent, it is surely hypercritical to notice. The swing of the club is neither too long nor too short—nothing is exaggerated, nothing is defective. Almost equally above criticism is the second illustration, of the finish of the swing, showing the follow-on, with free movement of the right foot and knee, good turn of the body at the hips, and arms well stretched away from the body. One of the most charming features of Mr. Ball's style, when he was at his best, was the perfect freedom with which he let his right shoulder come away under and round; and this was specially to be seen when he was flogging the ball away, with cleek or brassy, out of a cuppy lie. No player that the writer has seen ever gave quite the same impression of having his ball under control in the air as Mr. Ball gave. He was the master of so many strokes, so many *tours de force*. He could do things that other people could not do. He could cut a ball up out of a bad cuppy lie; we could all do that, all of us that are golfers at all, but we should play a downward, straightforward, cut or jerk stroke at it. Mr. Ball was not content with that. He would cut the ball out, and away it would go making for the right of the hole; but then it would suddenly catch sight of the putting green, or Mr. Ball would begin to work on it after his manner, as if he had it like a Brennan torpedo at the end of a wire; it would begin to turn inwards, towards the hole, announcing the astonishing fact that, though he had cut it out of a hole, Mr. Ball had still been able to put pull on it. How he did it goodness only knows (for I do not believe for a moment that he knew), but it is stark fact, and he was the only man that I ever saw that could combine the pull with the jerk in this way. I believe that his right shoulder, working so very well and freely

under, gave him more power than most of us; and then that much-reviled grip of his, with the right hand away underneath, may have had something to say to it, for this must be a stroke that is engineered principally with the right hand.

Mr. Ball's longest drive was got by means of this pull at the finish. These pulled balls always have a deal of run on them, and it seemed to be in this way that Mr. Ball counteracted that tendency, characteristic of his normal style, towards driving the low balls with a soaring finish, that were so pretty to watch, so very useful for playing boldly up to a green beyond a hazard, but which had the disadvantage where sheer length was required of falling very nearly dead.

We speak in the past tense of Mr. Ball's achievements, not at all because he is not capable of great things now, but because the time of his greatest feats was some few years back. 1890 was the year of his zenith, as regards achieved success, for in that year he won the open championship, being the first of amateurs to do so, and in the same year won the amateur championship also, a position of double championship that no one else has held before or since. But even so the writer would venture a doubt whether the finest exhibition of golf was not given by Mr. Ball a few years before this. He might not have mastered the consistent steadiness that gave him the campaigns of 1890, but he could do very brilliant—often did possibly more brilliant—things. But the wonder is rather, not that he should play less brilliantly than of old, but that he should have played so brilliantly for so long. And he has played brilliantly all this while in face of a constant besetting weakness—a tendency to miss short putts—a tendency that he shared, singularly enough, with his first great foe, Douglas Rolland. Nervousness on the putting green has always been wasting away Mr. Ball's extraordinary powers in the longer game. If he could get Park or Mr. Hilton or any one of the really good putters to do

Mr. John Ball, at End of Swing.

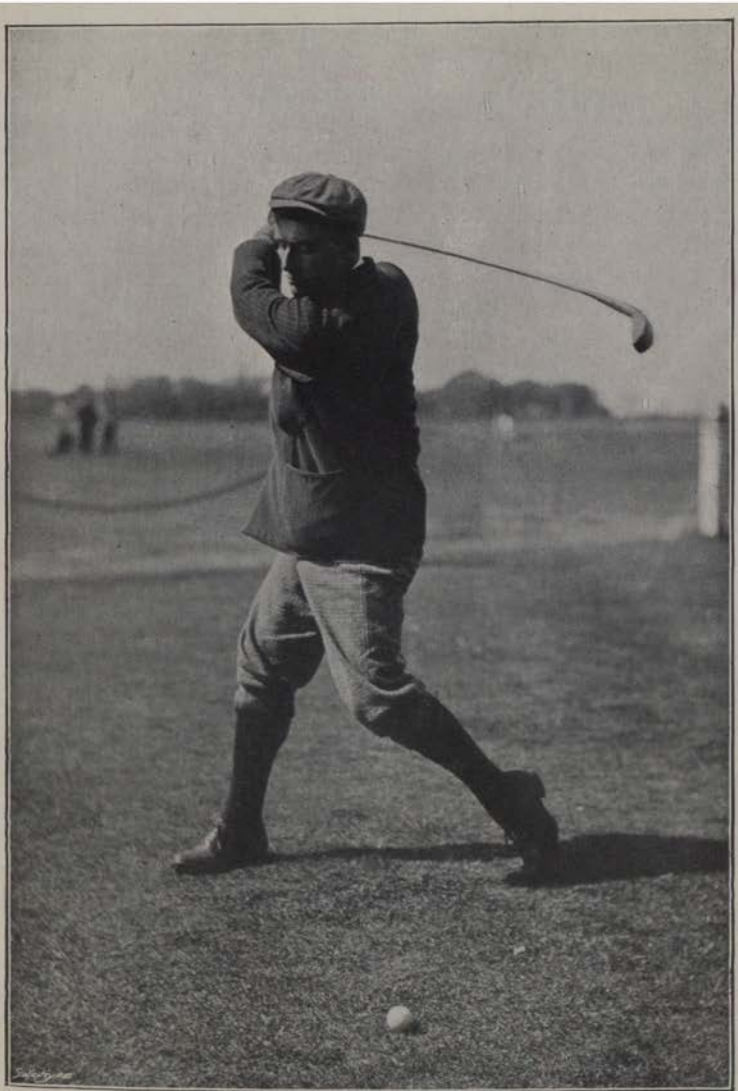
the work on the green for him, he would be without doubt the finest player in the world, instead of only one among the finest. His approaches he has always played well and prettily, and at times has had a run of laying them so very near the hole that he left himself not much putting to do. Indeed, Mr. Laidlay, after a series of matches, somewhere about 1890, with Mr. Ball, said that he had learnt never to mind when 'Johnnie' only put his approaches 'dead,' he was so thankful when they did not go 'in'! A little exaggerated, no doubt, but a significant exaggeration.

However, it is not his approaching, but his long game, that is the real secret of Mr. Ball's success. His finish of the stroke seems to me to show much the same qualities that we admired at the top of the swing—all is easy and sufficient —nothing is exaggerated or strained. Heel of right foot is well raised up, right knee slightly bent, body has come well round at the hips, but still the slight backward turn of the head seems to show that the eye has only just been raised from the ground and from the spot that the ball occupied. And then there is the characteristic and extremely free working of the shoulders, with the backbone as their pivot; and the hands are well thrown away from the body, arguing a good follow-on.

At Hoylake one sees many pseudo-Johnnie Balls — pious imitators who have done their best to form their style on this magnificent model. Yet, singularly enough, none of them seem to have come to great achievement. The great golfers of a younger generation that Hoylake has reared—Mr. Hilton, Mr. Graham, and the rest—do not seem to have owed much to imitation of him. Their styles are all individual, self-made. Perhaps it has to be that way with genius—that it must grow on its own lines; but for mere humble talent, if any will be modest enough to claim for himself no more than that, it cannot be amiss to do a little study and imitation of these great originals.

Mr. HILTON

The point in Mr. Hilton's style that seems most worthy of attention and imitation is the careful way in which he settles himself down to address the ball, so that in every stroke, feet, hands, ball, and all shall be in the exactly correct position relatively to each other and relatively to the line in which he intends to send the ball. This at least appears to me to be a distinguishing feature of his style, and one to which he probably owes not a little of his wonderful success. Few players, as it seems to me, pay an equal attention to this important matter of getting the feet in exactly the right position—right, that is to say, for them—when they wish to drive in a particular direction. You commonly see a player, even one of the best, address himself to the ball with more or less care, but with rather a casual glance towards the hole before his stand is taken. After that is taken, you see him sometimes bring his hands a little more forward or a little more back in order to adjust the face of the club square to the direction in which he wishes to send the ball. You will seldom see Mr. Hilton do this. If he wishes to change the direction of his aim—finding, after taking his stance, that it is not quite what he wishes it to be—he at once changes that stance. He does not change the position of his hands. The consequence is that the stroke is repeated, time after time, with unvarying accuracy by Mr. Hilton, with accuracy perhaps more unvarying than any one else has ever attained. For this is the characteristic of his game—its perfect accuracy. It is not that he drives unusually far, or that he approaches and putts miraculously well, but that he is so unvaryingly good at driving, approaching, and putting alike. This it is that wins him his championships, and it is hard not to think that this wonderful steadiness owes a great deal to that most valuable habit that he has formed of adjusting the direction of his stroke almost entirely by change of stance,



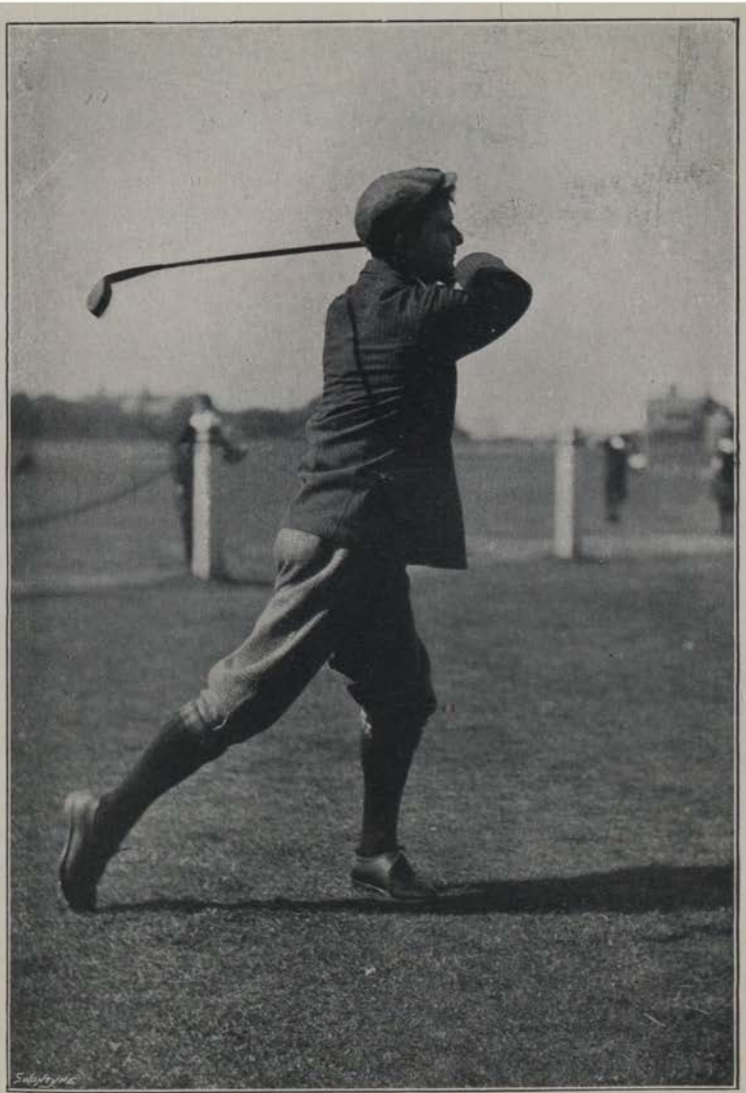
MR. H. H. HILTON, AT TOP OF SWING.

and scarcely at all by the more slipshod way that we so easily fall into of altering the angle of the club's face by shifting our hands forward or back. It may be that Mr. Hilton is not conscious of this characteristic of his game; it may be even that he would disclaim it—he will himself, in his own chapter, be the best exponent of his own methods—but certainly it is the characteristic that strikes an observer, and I have purposely written this before seeing his chapter, so that we may have the two points of view, that of the observer and that of the player. It is certain that all of us have methods and habits that we are not aware of, methods and habits that perhaps contradict the very maxims by which we believe our game to be guided; and even to note these very contradictions is sometimes useful and interesting.

Mr. Hilton's address to the ball, with right foot rather forward, and a relatively short swing back, does not give promise of the very great power that he actually puts into the stroke. The quiet way in which he draws back his club from the ball is one of his greatest merits as an exponent of golfing style. All the power is put in at the critical, the useful, time—at the very moment when the club is coming into contact with the ball; and his finish, as shown in the illustration, is very fine. He follows on after the ball splendidly. Mr. Hilton's driving is not unusually long, but it is fully long enough, and only the 'slashers' outdrive him at all considerably. On the other hand, he has the advantage of any of them, and of almost all the world, in consistent straightness. And again, though his tee shot is not an unusually long one, his second shot is, so far as I have been able to reckon, as long as his tee shot—always, of course, provided that the lie is a tolerable one—and this is as much as to say of his second shot that it *is* unusually long. And this unusual length, again, is capable of explanation; it is an effect of very accurate striking, and this not merely in the sense that the club-head is going in the right direction when it meets the ball, and that the ball is neither heeled nor toed,

but also that the ball is consistently hit at the right height on the club's face. This is a point that is very often neglected. It does not have such an importance in the tee shot as in the second shot, because when the ball is on a tee the tee of itself lifts it to the right height on the face of a club. But so many of us hit our second shots fairly, to all appearance, and yet they do not go as far as they ought to go, and we are rather at a loss to account for it. Observation of Mr. Hilton's game gives a good object-lesson that may teach us something of the reason. His club-head always seems to get very well down to the ball, so that the ball is struck fairly in the centre of the face. There is no striking of the ball with the horn of the club. That is really the common reason that second shots, apparently well struck, do not fly as they should fly; they are hit on the horn. They rise in the air, perhaps, in consequence of an underspin given to them by the downward direction of the hit, but they have not the carrying power that they would have had if the horn had nipped in below the ball, and the ball been fairly struck by the good driving wood or leather of the club's face. Mr. Hilton seems to realise very fully the value of this getting well down to the ball, and also to be able to put it into practice with undeviating certainty. Thanks to this faculty he is never at a loss when a good carrying shot is wanted—he has no difficulty about getting the ball well into the air.

But, after all, the most telling part of his game is his approach play. He has a faculty of playing the ball straight up to the hole, with cut on it, without any of that curve from the right that is the common device of most of us when we put on cut. Taylor has this faculty, too, and has described very effectively his own methods in the chapter he has written for this book. I am in hopes that Mr. Hilton will let us into some of his secrets too, but that is not to say that we can all hope to assimilate them. When he startled us all by winning his first open championship at Muirfield, he was said to have holed not one, but several, mashie shots. This



Mr. H. H. Hilton, at Finish of Drive.

was marvellous work, and he has holed a great many since. He has a stroke that is peculiarly his own, a low approach, with slight pull on it, that is particularly useful against a wind. And again he has a fine long approach stroke with his brassy. This is a most useful shot at certain distances, but it is apt to be a snare to those who have not mastered it perfectly, because of its liability to slice the ball and send it boomerang-wise to the right. This is to be obviated by especial care that the arms be sent well out after the ball, by following through as straight as if the shot were a full one.

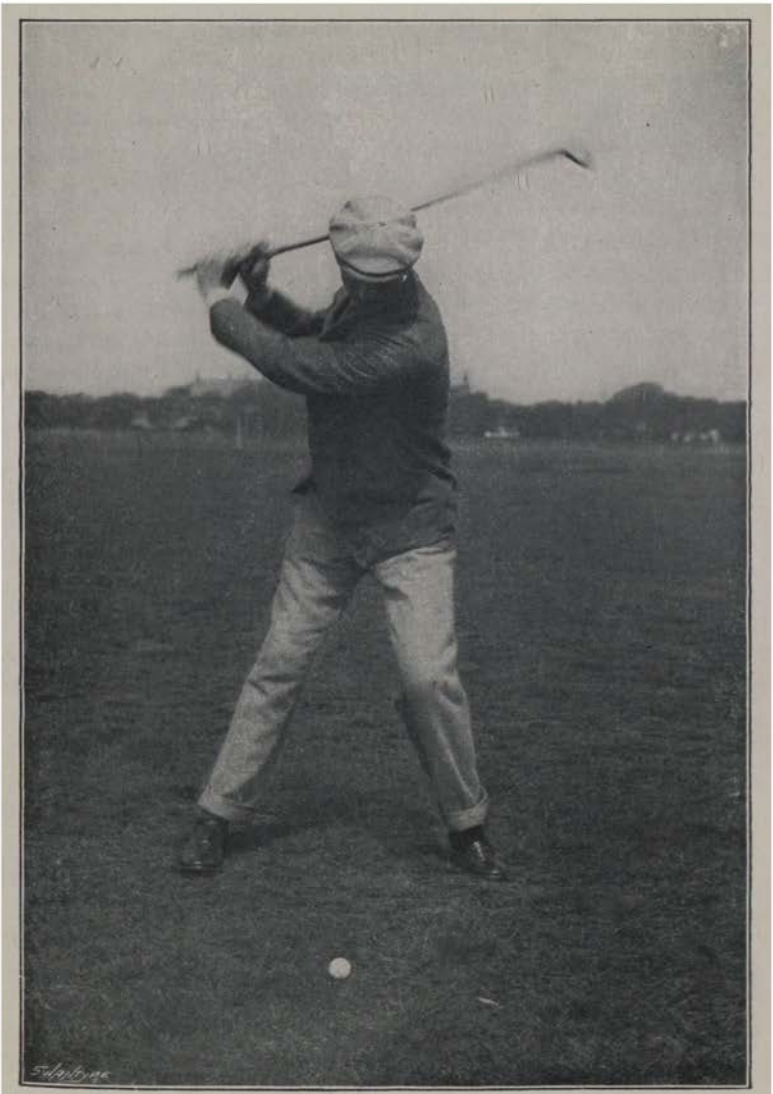
And when Mr. Hilton reaches the green his almost mechanical accuracy is perhaps still more strongly in evidence in his putting. Fewer strokes are thrown away by him on the putting green, probably, than by any other living player. He virtually never fails to lay the long putt dead, or hole the short one, and for the holing of the short putt he believes himself to have discovered a secret which he generously gives the world—you must keep the body absolutely still. This is his theory, it is also his practice, and as practised by him it crowns the theory with perpetual success. Possibly it may be of something like equal use to many others, but of putting we are inclined to think that no better account has been given than that which calls it an inspiration.

Seeing that Mr. Hilton himself is contributing what is perhaps the most important chapter in this book, it does not seem that it would make for edification to say more here about his style, illustrated as it is by the accompanying reproductions from photographs. He should be the ablest exponent of his own most able methods.

Mr. CHARLES HUTCHINGS

Mr. Charles Hutchings is a wonderful instance of the success that it is possible for a man to achieve at golf though he has not taken up the game until his school days are fairly

passed. Until Mr. Hutchings was thirty years of age we believe we may say that virtually he never saw a golf club. Beginning thus late, but practising with great assiduity, he has worked his way into the first class of players, and has done several notable things in his golfing career. Nothing perhaps that he has ever done was more notable than the manner in which he tackled Mr. F. G. Tait in the amateur championship tournament of 1898. Both men played well, and Mr. Hutchings's putting was extraordinarily good. At the end of the round the two were all even, and it was not till the twentieth hole had been played that Mr. Hutchings succumbed. This is wonderful going for a man who never touched a golf club till he was over thirty years old. It can nearly be matched. Mr. S. H. Fry, though he has played not a quarter as long as Mr. Hutchings, began golf, not indeed when he was over thirty, but when he was well over twenty, and is a scarcely less formidable player. And these two have this further in common, that is interesting to notice —both are very good billiard players. Considering how little attention Mr. Hutchings pays to billiards, he plays wonderfully, a hundred break being not at all beyond his powers; and Mr. Fry, playing the game more seriously, has brought it to a much higher degree of perfection, and has held the amateur billiard championship. These instances are far from exhaustive of the connection that seems to hold between good billiard playing and good golf playing. Mr. J. R. Hutchison, Mr. W. H. Fowler—who used to be such a hard hitter in the Somersetshire County Cricket team—and many others are instances in point. It is not very difficult to see features that golf has in common with billiards and with a few other games. Billiards is one of the comparatively few games at which the player strikes a ball at rest, though there is this general and remarkable point of difference, that whereas most players look at the object ball in billiards, it is a primary maxim of golf that the player should keep his eye fast on the ball he is striking. Yet even to the rule of



Mr. Charles Hutchings, at Top of Swing.

keeping the eye on the object billiard ball there is a notable exception in the person of Joseph Bennett, the player who advertises himself, justly enough we believe, as the only living man who has ever beaten Roberts for the championship. Bennett inculcates, both by practice and precept, the method of keeping the eye on the ball that the cue is to strike. Nevertheless, the object ball is probably the one at which ninety-nine out of every hundred billiard players look when they make the stroke.

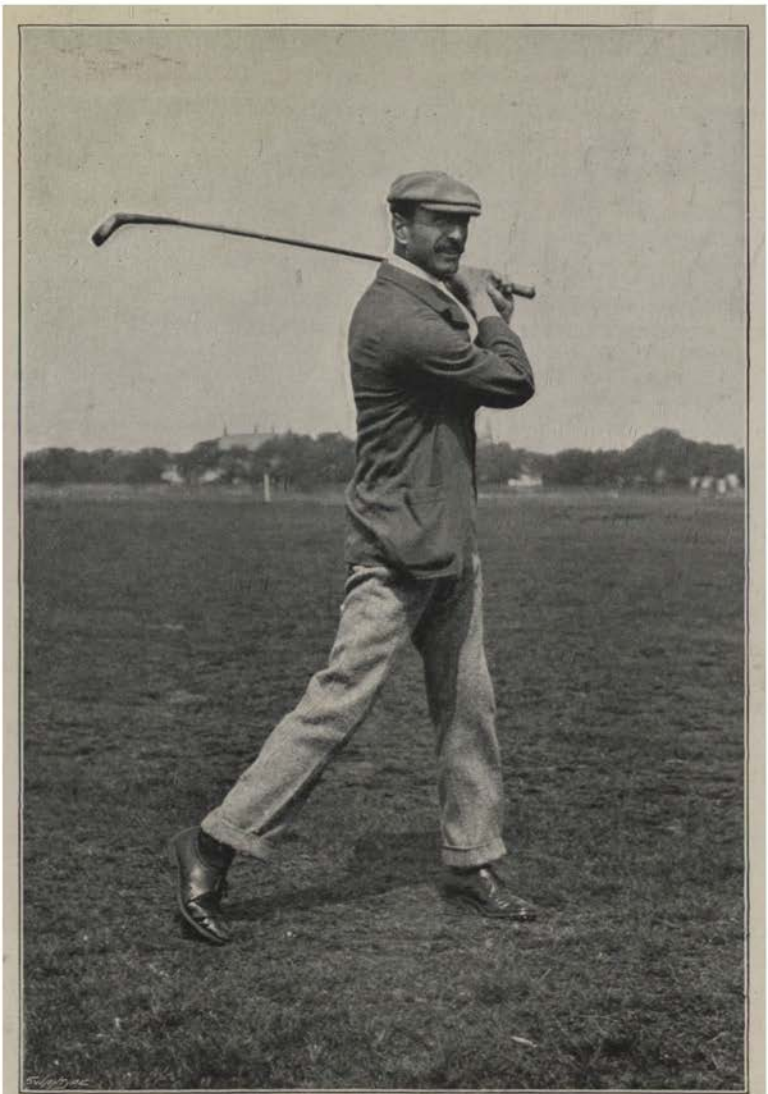
And, over and above the great point that the ball in both games is at rest when it is struck, there is this further resemblance, that both games require great nicety of strength and direction, and that the eye is trained in both to indicate to the hand the strength with which the ball should be hit. There are also subtler problems, connected with the influence of spin on the travel of the ball, that are in some measure common to the two games.

Of course all this is not to be taken as implying that because Mr. Hutchings was a good billiard player when he took up golf it was inevitable that he should become a good golfer. It was very far from inevitable, and there are many other factors that have gone to the making of his remarkable success. That he should prove a good putter was perhaps more than likely, but his singular success in the long game is very largely to be attributed to the style that he has adopted, and especially, perhaps, to the ease and quietness of that style. It is possible enough, and it is not uncommon, to see players who have learned golf as boys play first-class golf in a style that is better to be described by some such epithet as 'slashing' than by 'easy' or 'quiet;' but for a man to achieve any success by such methods after his muscles have set and he has passed his thirtieth year we can hardly think to be conceivable. Many woo golf in this bold manner, and many fail. It is the more patient, and the more controlled, that succeed. There is a quiet manner, without any deficiency of force, about Mr. Hutchings's driving style that

is worthy of much attention, and probably of some imitation by those who are taking up the game comparatively late in life. Unfortunately, the second of our illustrations, showing the player at the finish of his stroke, scarcely does his style justice. Something, very surely, has distracted his attention just at the moment that his club was meeting the ball, and he has glanced up an instant before he should. This is not Mr. Hutchings's way. If it was he would not be a first-class golfer. But, allowing this unwarrantable departure from the paths of rectitude, the rest of the methods of his swing are well shown.

There are one or two points about it that seem to imply that it is not the style of a man whose golf was learned in boyhood. At the top of the swing the left knee has been bent forward a little, to allow the body to turn a little, just a little; but there is no turning whatever on the left toe—a turning which would have permitted so much freer a turn of the body, and which we scarcely ever fail to notice in the swings of those whose golf was learned in childhood. Given this, that there has been no turning on the left toe, it follows as an anatomical necessity that there is scarcely any turn on the hips. The swing of the upper part of the body —of the shoulders and the arms—is very much more orthodox, and indeed the left shoulder has come round with remarkable freedom considering the tied points lower down. Naturally the club has not gone far round behind the head—scarcely further than to an angle of forty-five degrees—but we have already seen from many instances that a long back swing is not a necessary condition of long driving.

Mr. Hutchings is a long driver. There are longer, but among first-class players he well holds his own. And he drives a low ball with plenty of travel on it when it reaches the ground. The manner in which he gets this long ball is shown for us better in the second illustration—that of the finish of his swing—than in the first, although this second is marred, in an unimportant detail, by the distraction of



Mr. Charles Hutchings, at Finish of Swing.

attention that has evidently occurred. But the picture shows us faithfully enough the important and best features of Mr. Hutchings's finish, and especially that straightening of the whole body on the left leg which is the most striking thing about it. In the upward swing Mr. Hutchings had not let the club's swing be helped by any turn on the left toe; but in the downward swing—at the finish and follow-on—he has let the movement be helped by a very free turn on the right foot, the heel is right away up off the ground, and the whole action of the leg and foot has helped to carry the body forward on to the left leg. And by this time we ought to have come to the understanding that it is the second part of the swing—the downward stroke, and the finish, after the ball is struck—that is far the more important. The upward seems to matter little, in comparison; and therefore we can see in the freedom of this finish the reason of Mr. Hutchings's fine driving, in spite of the constraint of some of the hinges in the mechanism of the upward swing. It gives a fine character to his stroke—this straightening of himself up, as he does, at the end, on the left leg.

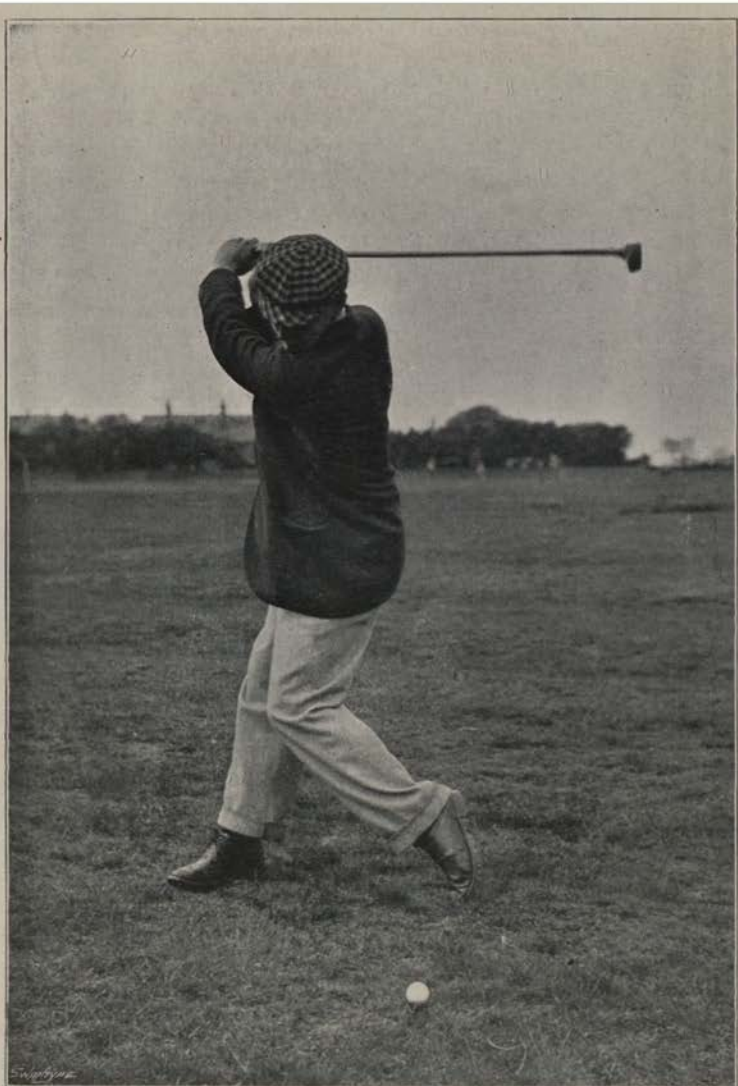
For the rest, in the way the club has come round, and so on, there is not much to remark specially; but what is worthy of remark is that all the movements indicated in these pictures are made so smoothly and so quietly; without any hurrying, or jerk, or pressing. In carrying the stroke forward Mr. Hutchings lets his body, and even his head, come forward with it in a manner that is not altogether orthodox, but which no doubt helps to give the stroke power, and to get that long low ball that is characteristic of his driving; and now and again, when Mr. Hutchings is not at his best, this carry-on of his body is apt to be a little too quickly, almost jerkily, done. But it is not fair to criticise a man by anything but his best work, and Mr. Hutchings's best work is second-best to that of no golfer in the world; and it is marvellous that he should have won the position he has after so late a start in the race. Especially, perhaps, by

the learner of mature years should that upward swing of Mr. Hutchings's be studied, although it is the less perfect; for it shows very strikingly how much freedom is sacrificed by not turning on the left toe. Mr. Hutchings fairly compensates for this lack of freedom in the action of the lower joints by the lissom turn of his shoulders; but all cannot command these compensations, and the orthodox style is more worthy of imitation.

Mr. H. G. B. ELLIS

The style of Mr. H. G. B. Ellis is one that ought to be worthy of some special study, for there is a special feature of very great value in his execution—he is without exception the straightest driver that the writer ever saw, and in the opinion of most of those that know his game he is deemed the straightest in the world. It is not very easy to discover the secret of the straightness. Probably it came rather as a divine gift than as the result of any deliberate study. We all try hard to drive straight—equally hard, it may be—but we do not all meet with equal success. The really straight driver is born, not made.

Mr. Ellis's swing is a very peculiar one; it has more peculiarities than appear in this picture of him at the top of the swing; and yet sufficient are even here to be seen. Notable among them is the direction in which the club-head points—not downward, according to the practice and special precept of Willie Fernie, but outward, straight end-on to the camera. This is very unusual, we might almost have said very wrong; but there is some other peculiarity about Mr. Ellis's swing which makes it all come quite right. No man brings his club through straighter, or sends the ball away quite as straight. A good point to notice in this picture is the height that the player's hands are raised above the head. A strict horizontal seems to be the position that the club-shaft takes behind the head.



MR. H. G. B. ELLIS, AT TOP OF SWING.

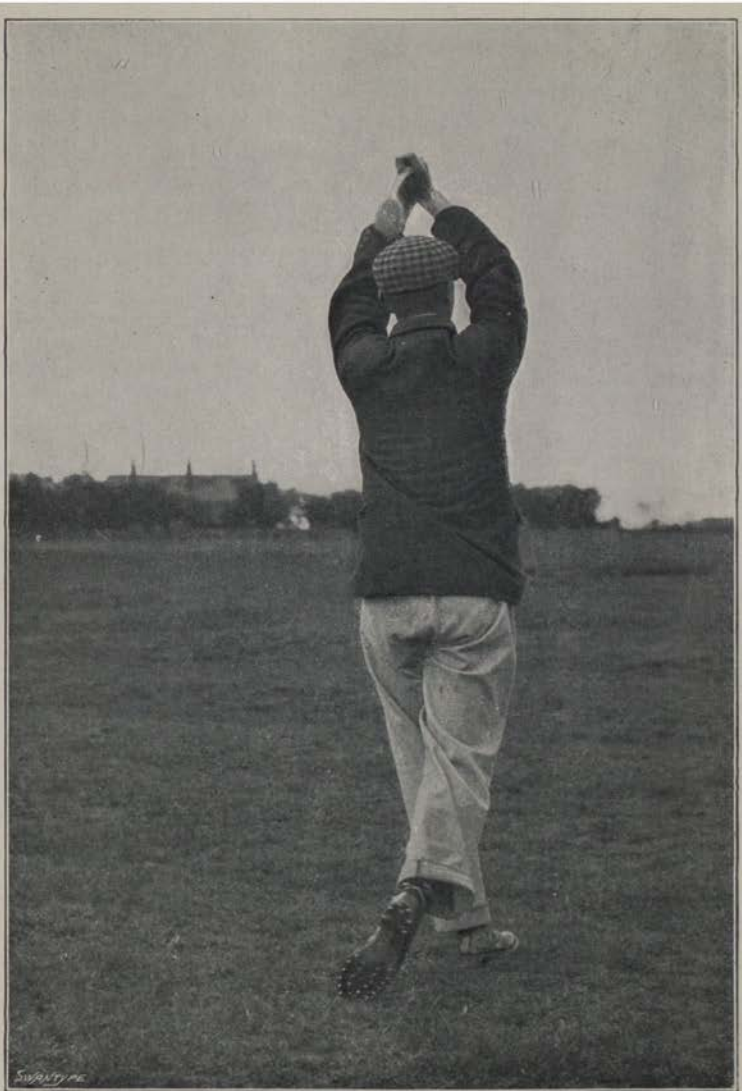
But there is a very remarkable feature about Mr. Ellis's upward swing that does not appear in this picture. It would need positive genius, aided by a little luck, to reproduce it properly by photography. There appears to be a joint in the swing. It is not all done in a piece. It appears as if it were done in two motions. This appearance is given by the curious way in which Mr. Ellis brings his club away from the ball at first by the straightening of the arms only. He does not gradually bend the left knee, rise on the left toe, turn on the hip, as the club comes away. He waits, to begin these movements, until his arms are at the furthest stretch. Then, as the arms begin to turn up round the head, and as the left shoulder comes round, then, and not till then, he helps or follows the upward swing with these movements of foot, knee, and hips. It has a most curious effect, but perhaps it is all an aid to the wonderful straightness attained by Mr. Ellis in his driving.

This straightness must mean only one thing—that his club-head is moving very truly in the ball's proposed line of flight at the moment of impact. Straightness of driving, we must surely think, depends very much more on this than on the hitting of the ball in the centre of the club-face, for we have to assume, in the case of first-class players playing their game, that a very large majority of the balls are hit in the centre of the face. And yet it is not too much to say that a very large majority of these balls, so hit, diverge a little one side or other of the actually correct line—a considerably larger percentage show this slight divergence in the case of most players than in the case of Mr. Ellis. The reason of his superior straightness, it appears then, must be looked for in the absolutely correct line of travel of his club-head at the moment that it meets the ball.

It seems very possible that this wonderful correctness may be helped by his habit of taking the club away from the ball by the simple straightening of the arms before any of the other joints and muscles of the body begin to take any active

part in the upward swing. It has always been a maxim that as the club ascends so is it likely to descend. It is the old story: 'Ye're takin' the club up ower straight,' says the professional adviser, meaning thereby that you are bringing it down too straight, and so implying that the way to correct this too straight descent is to mend the too great straightness of the ascent. And as a matter of fact a similar series of movements, in reverse order, do actually show themselves in Mr. Ellis's downward swing, and it is hard to think that he does not owe much of his very correct driving to the peculiarity of his upward swing which is reproduced in the downward. To keep the arms at full stretch as long as possible in the upward swing is a maxim that has been emphasised by many golfing instructors. By none is it more fully obeyed than by Mr. Ellis, and by none is the maxim of the pedagogues more fully justified.

But such as are the peculiarities and the excellences of Mr. Ellis's upward swing, even they are less apparent than the singular finish which the accompanying picture of him at the end of the stroke illustrates so well. It is a finish that is unlike any other that we seem to be familiar with. Of all those that are shown in this picture gallery, perhaps the finishes of Mr. Balfour-Melville and of Mr. Mure Fergusson most nearly resemble it. But even these latter fine players do not carry out the bringing of the arms away quite to the same extent as Mr. Ellis. The club in this picture has not come up *round* his head at all, but absolutely *over* his head, so much so that we cannot say that at the finish it is more towards the left side of the head than towards the right. It is absolutely straight above it. With such a finish as this it is inevitable that Mr. Ellis must have thrown his arms very far out after the ball. His body has turned so completely round on the hips, aided by the movements of the right knee and foot, that it is directly facing the line in which the ball has flown, and the club, pointing directly backwards from that line, has the end of the shaft directly indicating to the



Mr. H. G. B. Ellis, at Finish of Drive.

ball, as one might fancifully think, the line that it ought to take.

And is it not possible that in this remarkable finish we see the logical sequence of that very straight and correct line of travel that the club-head took in leaving the ball, and again followed, in the reverse direction, when it came down to the ball? Does it not seem that the arms went on, and straightened themselves out again, after the ball was struck, in the same manner and to the same remarkable extent that they were straightened before? It seems to me that we can infer these excellent merits from the picture of the finish of his stroke, and that we can observe them in actual practice as we watch him drive.

I have dwelt at some length on the peculiarities of Mr. Ellis's style, partly because it is so peculiar and interesting as a curiosity, and partly because the peculiarities seem such good ones to affect and, in due measure, to imitate. It cannot be said too often that when one suggests imitation the meaning is not that a man should discard the style that serves him passably well, and strive to construct a new system for himself on the lines adopted by this or that excellent player, but merely that he may do well to bear their excellences in his mind, and to try to graft on his own style such a measure of them as it can bear without strain. If he tries to do more than this, the effect must be disastrous; but if he can be content with this, it seems strange if it may not be beneficial.

Mr. Ellis is a young golfer who has not yet made the mark that he ought to make, and that he will make, in big competitions; but by those who know his play no excuse will be required for this mention of it. I believe that he has equalled the records of the Sandwich and the Woking courses, both records that have stood some severe tests. He is one of the very best of the young school of university golfers. His driving is long, as well as wonderfully straight; but it is not on his driving only that he depends. He is good all through

the piece, through the green, in the approach play, and on the putting green. But the straightness of his driving is, and probably will always be, his greatest merit and the chief instrument of the successes that ought to lie before him.

Mr. LESLIE BALFOUR-MELVILLE

Had 'the man in the street' been asked, twenty years ago, who was the finest amateur player in Scotland, there is very little doubt that he would have answered without hesitation (always supposing that he had ever 'heard tell' of the game at all), Mr. Leslie Balfour. Since then Mr. Balfour has taken the name of Melville in addition, but if he is no longer the man who would be named as the most capable representative of amateur Scotch golf, he is certainly among the first half-dozen. More than that, it is the opinion of all the best judges that he is playing as well now as ever he did, and he has played with a very remarkable consistency all through that long space of twenty years. With that he has all the while been handicapped by a weak point in his game, which is as much as to say that in certain parts of the game he is extraordinarily good. It is quite certain that he has always been an indifferent putter, and we believe that Mr. Balfour-Melville would pardon us this criticism and would acquiesce in it. It follows that either his long game or his approach play must be just a little better than the ordinary first-class standard. We cannot find any especial merit in his approaching, though in this part of the game he is well up to the first-class mark. It remains only to infer that his remarkable excellence is in the driving—in the long game—in his play from the tee and through the green.

Those who have played much with Mr. Balfour-Melville, or have seen much of his game, cannot fail to find this conclusion confirmed by their experience. The writer has played with many fine drivers, with the drivers of terrific

length (they are apt to be a little wild), with the drivers of exceptional straightness (they are often a little short), but there is no opponent against whom he seems so often and so continually to be playing the odd, after the tee shot, as with Mr. Balfour-Melville, for he is both long and straight. When he is driving well, and he does not often fail to be driving well, there is an unusual power in his stroke, an unusual length of sustained flight in the ball that, starting as a rule rather low, continues its flight beyond expectation and falls with such a trajectory as gives it a great length of run after touching the ground.

It is, perhaps, well to emphasise this, because the length of Mr. Balfour-Melville's driving—its constant length—is not quite fully appreciated. And yet, in discussion of the relative merits of golfers, criticism on his putting is common enough; but what is not common is to find the critics realising the feature of his game, by which it is so powerful in spite of the confessed defects of its short game. Mr. Balfour-Melville is a magnificent driver, and the writer does not know where to look for a better combination of the far and the sure with all the long clubs. Neither does he know a model which a beginner might more worthily study.

Mr. Balfour-Melville's is eminently a painstaking style. It is a style that seems to be the result of hard work. We seem to see him, as he addresses himself to the ball, settling himself down as if with the conscious purpose of getting into the position in which the club will come well through, and the stroke be played with force and precision. All good golfers, no doubt, go through this process, but with none of them does it seem to be so consciously and deliberately done. With others it seems more like an act of intuition, the processes are not to be seen so plainly, and for this very reason the style of Mr. Balfour-Melville seems specially to lend itself to study.

Add to that that the style is in itself so good. The club

comes through so well and truly. It follows on so straight and far after the ball. It is so smooth and even throughout.

Mr. Balfour-Melville's is essentially the style of a strong man, of a man possessing compact muscular strength. All the orthodox elements are to be seen in his upward swing. The weight is thrown completely on the right leg, the turn of the body on the hips is sufficiently free, and aided by the bend of the left knee and lift of the left heel. The left shoulder has come well round. And besides all these, there is rather a special merit, a merit which not a great many share, that the hands are brought well away from the shoulder, high above it at the top of the swing. This is a point of excellence, because if the hands are in this position at the top of the swing, it almost of necessity follows that they have been kept well out from the body all the time, or, in other words, that the upward swing has been long—describing a wide circle. The club, it will be seen, has come just a little below the horizontal line behind the head.

And if this feature—the keeping of the arms well out from the body, so as to make the swing big, in the best sense—is well shown in the illustration of Mr. Balfour-Melville at the top of his swing, it is even yet more strongly in evidence in the second illustration, of the finish of the swing. There are, I think, only two other finishes in our picture gallery that show the club finishing above the head, as in this case—those of Mr. Mure Fergusson and of Mr. Ellis, the latter of whom perhaps carries this finish out to its fullest extreme. None, however, show the club quite so high above the head, or the hands quite so far away from the body. The inference is that Mr. Balfour-Melville's arms have been very greatly extended throughout the whole swing, and I think that in this we may see part at least of the secret of his exceptionally fine driving. All the rest of the action of the follow-on is complete and perfect, if less striking. The body is facing t[he] direction of the ball's flight, the right shoulder working under, the body turning on the hips, the right knee and foot aiding

Mr. Leslie Balfour-Melville, at Top of Swing.

the action, and perhaps a further rather exceptional aid to a long follow-on is the slight bend of the left knee. It is a very perfect style, and well worthy of some pious imitation.

To give anything like even the most meagre sketch of Mr. Balfour-Melville's triumphant career as a golfer would be quite impossible in the brief space of these notices. He has won medals of the Royal and Ancient Club, of the Prestwick Club, and of the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers, innumerable; and he has gone on adding to his list of successes year after year with remarkable steadiness, not with any exceptional brilliancy at any one period, but with unvarying consistency. At St. Andrews, in 1895, he crowned all his previous victories by winning the amateur championship after three of the most severe matches that have ever been witnessed, each of them finishing at the nineteenth hole, and his opponent in the final heat being the redoubtable Mr. John Ball.

Mr. Balfour-Melville may claim to be regarded as a link between the older and the younger schools of golf. He played golf as the equal, and later as more than the equal, of the finest exponents of what has been called the 'grand manner' in golf—that manner which modern lack of manners has suffered to decay. His opponents, in his younger years, for the St. Andrews medals must have been such men as Sir Robert Hay, George Glennie, Admiral Maitland Dougall, Colonel Boothby, Mr. Thomas Hodge, the chief illustrator of the Badminton book on golf and equally excellent with golf club and with pencil. In these ranks Mr. Balfour-Melville appeared as a young but tremendously formidable recruit. Then came the boom of southern golf—Mr. Arthur Molesworth, Mr. John Ball, and others presuming to contest Scottish amateur pre-eminence in Scotland's national game. For a while Mr. Balfour-Melville appeared as Scotland's chief champion. And even now, though there are one or two that might perhaps be chosen for this perilous post of honour

before him, he can still meet the very best of them on level terms and fully hold his own.

It is a remarkable fact that in the opinion of those who have known Mr. Balfour-Melville's game longest and most intimately, he became a stronger player, a better golfer—rose, in fact, to the occasion—as soon as he found himself in contact with a new school of golfers, playing on different, and sometimes on self-taught, methods. It is the part of genius to rise to the occasion in this manner; and yet the genius that we see exhibited in Mr. Balfour-Melville's game is essentially in conformity with that definition of genius which styles it 'an infinite capacity for taking pains.' Mr. Balfour-Melville's painstaking is infinite; and the faculty never deserts him, no matter what may be the condition of the match. He is never too many holes up, or too many down, to be concentrated, with all his powers, on the particular stroke before him. This, which is perhaps a mental habit rather than anything else, is certainly worth study and imitation so far as it is given to one to be able to imitate it. Few have his faculty of concentration. It is a faculty that makes Mr. Balfour-Melville very hard to beat. He is a nervous player, as it would appear—it is scarcely possible to account in any other way for the occasional marked weakness of his short play—but he is a very determined player. Without great determination it could scarcely have been possible for him to win his championship, as he did, gaining each of his last three matches at the nineteenth hole.

But the point that is specially to be noted is not the exceptional brilliancy at any one time or in any one match of his game, but rather the consistency with which he has gone on playing very fine golf for so many years. And this steady excellence of execution it is impossible to help assigning to one principal reason—namely, the undeviating excellence of his style. It seems to be the fact that, just as ill-made horses can go well for a while, so can golfers with singular and unorthodox styles play well for a while. But the

MR. LESLIE BALFOUR-MELVILLE, AT FINISH OF DRIVE.

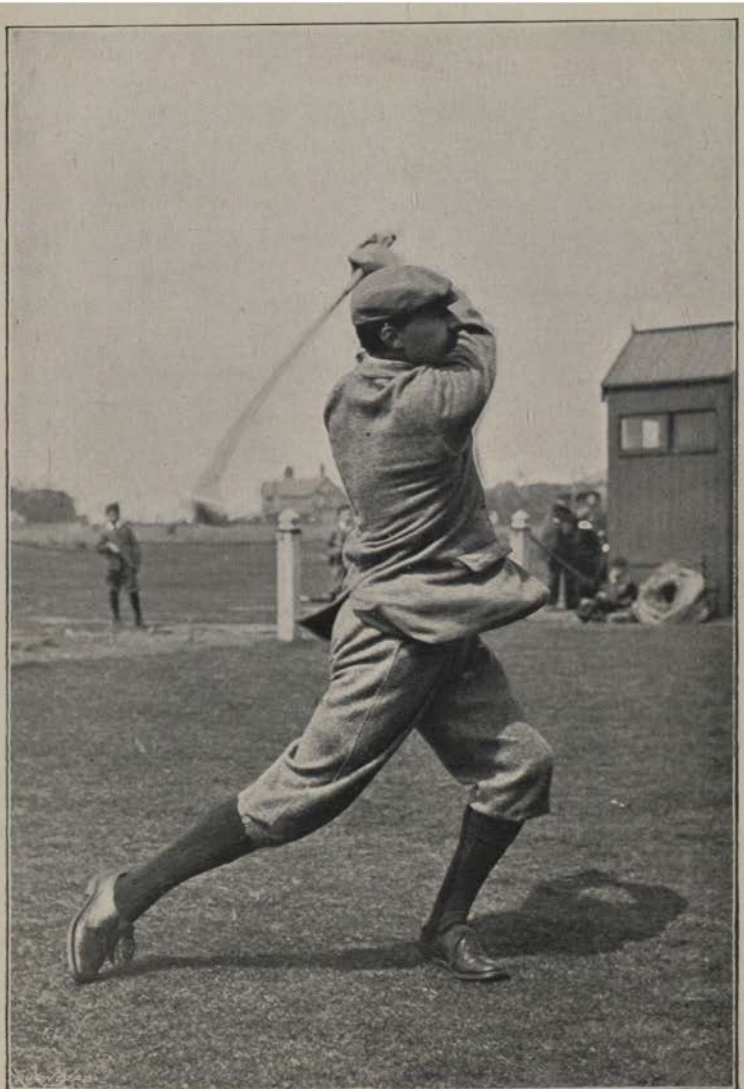
ill-made horses do not wear well, they go amiss and break down; and the like calamities are apt to overtake the golfer who plays in a style of aberrant genius. For a while all is well with him, but he is liable to cruel lapses from his best game, and his seasons of recovery are but brief. But the golfer that has made a really sound style his own is far less liable to these disastrous lapses, and we may see, I think, a striking instance of this general proposition in the particular case of Mr. Balfour-Melville. So lately as the autumn of 1897, he finished first, and Mr. Mure Fergusson second, for the Royal and Ancient Club's medal, scoring a triumph for the veterans and for a really orthodox style of golf.

MR. R. T. BOOTHBY

This picture of Mr. R. T. Boothby at the end of his drive is interesting; not only because it shows a characteristic feature of the swing of so fine a driver and so good an all-round player, but also because it is a grand illustration of what we may call the 'magnificent' style of finish. It is a finish in which all the fine qualities are carried to the uttermost extreme. It is impossible to conceive a finish in which the club is brought further round, over the shoulder, or the body allowed to follow on more freely, with the help of every joint and muscle of the frame. And I have put it next to the illustrations of Mr. Leslie Balfour-Melville, because it shows how great a difference there can be in the styles of two players both of the first class and both graduates in the same school, though it is to be said, indeed, that Mr. Balfour-Melville had taken his degree before Mr. Boothby was anything but a freshman. But St. Andrews was the Alma Mater of both, and it is not a little singular that the results of what was practically the same education should be so different. In Mr. Balfour-Melville's finish there is very much more evidence of control. He might have swung

further round, probably might have hit harder, had he so wished. But there is none of this prudent parsimony about the swing of Mr. Boothby. We cannot doubt that he has put every ounce of his by no means inconsiderable power into the stroke, and the result is that he is a remarkably fine driver—a driver of the magnificent school. It is also to be said that this magnificent style of driving is scarcely the style that it is wisest for the learner to adopt as his model. It requires genius—that genius that is the outcome of very early initiation into the ways of golf—to swing correctly with this perfect freedom. The 'control' of Mr. Tait's and Mr. Balfour-Melville's method is more to be commended to the notice of a pupil; and yet, if a man feel that his swing is poor, tied up, and shortened, so that he is not getting sufficient freedom in his follow-on, we cannot conceive a better medicine for his cure than some attention paid to the magnificent follow-on of Mr. Boothby. As a model for imitation it is to be eschewed, but as a suggestion for inspiration it is to be welcomed and studied. The extreme bend of the left knee, allowing the body to go on after the ball, the almost exaggerated stretching of the right leg, and the tremendous swing of the arms that has caused the club to be carried so far round behind the head, are all corrective suggestions to anything short or poor in the way of a finish.

Mr. Boothby is on both sides come from a family of distinguished golfers, his father, the late Colonel Boothby, having been a frequent winner of the Royal and Ancient Club's medals before Mr. Balfour-Melville, Mr. Mure Fergusson, Mr. Alexander Stuart, and others whom we may look upon as the youngest pupils of the older school of golf, came into the field to win them from the older men. On the maternal side, his grandfather was the celebrated Mr. George Condie, of Perth, of whom it was said that the reason he won so very large a proportion of the matches he engaged in was that he was always past the hole. An elder brother of Mr. R. T. Boothby's, the late Mr. Fitz Boothby, who died



Mr. R. T. Boothby, at Finish of Swing.

in the very prime of his youth, was a magnificent golfer too, and in the characteristic features of his play not unlike his younger brother.

It is noticeable in Mr. Boothby's finish that he gets his hands well away from his body, rather after the good example of Mr. Balfour-Melville, but more round the head, and not so much above it. It is impossible to doubt as one looks at this finish that the ball has been hit a cruelly severe blow, and it does not require a long experience of Mr. Boothby's power as an opponent in a match to confirm this inference. In score play and in big competitions he has perhaps been less successful than his power should warrant, but he has plenty of time before him, in which there is little doubt that he will justify his magnificent methods.

Mr. F. FAIRLIE

Mr. Frank Fairlie is one of the very few among the inventors of very many golfing inventions who have devised a really new style of club that has absolute merits, and that has achieved success simply by their virtue. I mean that several very notable players have invented some slight and inconsiderable departure from the accepted mode in golf clubs, and have patented this, and sold it in some numbers; but this has been generally a *succès d'estime*, a success depending on the fame of the patentee, rather than on the merit of the thing patented. Mr. Frank Fairlie is a very famous golfer; but he is not famous enough for his name to carry the weight of an invention that had not distinct merits of its own. He has not won the open championship, nor the amateur, though he is strong enough player to make a good bid for the latter at any time, and has won competitions of scarcely less importance. He had a great win, for instance, at Sandwich, for the St. George's Vase, when all that was best in golfing England and Scotland was

gathered together there, on the first occasion that the amateur championship was played on that southern green. His second round in that contest beat all previous competition records for the course. In the same year he won many another notable golfing triumph, and though he has perhaps played equally well in other years, he has never achieved quite the same share of success.

Therefore, not being a champion, or amateur champion, or even an ex- of either of these, it had to be a good invention that could make his clubs famous. And it is good. The blade—the face—of the iron clubs is set on in advance of the 'hose,' as it is called (that is to say, the iron neck or socket into which the wooden shaft fits). One great advantage of this is obvious, obvious above all to the man that has a trick of hitting his balls with the pipe—the hose or neck—of the club. It is impossible, with Mr. Fairlie's clubs, to hit the ball on the hose, because the hose is away back behind the face, and only by hitting left-handed-wise could the ball be struck with that part. So this is one fatal error—besetting sin, indeed—of some golfers that Mr. Fairlie's club has done away. And then it has another advantage: that when the ball is lying in a cup, the blade of a Fairlie iron or mashie is the first thing, in the downward stroke, to cleave into that cup, and so get in beneath the ball. But with the ordinary mashie or iron, that little angle where the blade joins the hose has to go down into the cup to the depth of an inch or so, before the blade can come into contact with the ball at all. Slight as this difference is, the loss is all to the discredit of the ordinary club, as compared with Mr. Fairlie's. And a great point about Mr. Fairlie's clubs as a patent invention is that he plays with them himself. Singularly enough, it is not always thus with patentees.

And his play with them is their best advertisement. The writer has played with a good many golfers, of tolerable calibre, and has suffered many severe beatings; but he never remembers to have been so out of heart with himself, so

demoralised by an opponent, and so altogether inclined to say, once and for ever, of golf that it was 'a rotten game,' as in course of certain matches that he played with Mr. Frank Fairlie on the links of Nairn. Mr. Fairlie was in fine form with all his clubs, but with his iron clubs—with these quaint iron clubs that have the face right away in front of the shaft—there was no holding him, he was irresistible, it had ceased to be golf at all. From all distances—150 yards down to 15—Mr. Fairlie was laying the ball, not only near the hole, but stone dead. In the language of Euclid, 'it was absurd.'

There can be no doubt that these clubs of Mr. Fairlie's, apart from their merits for dealing with a cupped ball, make the approaching work easier. Speaking of approaching mashies generally, without any reference to Mr. Fairlie's clubs, Sayers once observed to the present writer that a big-faced mashie was easier to play with than a small-faced, because you did not need to be 'so careful' with it. What he meant was that with a good big-faced thing you did not require to take the same pains to guard against hitting on the hose as with the small-faced, so that you had all the more pains to spare for the line and the strength. Of course, with a club of the build patented by Mr. Fairlie, where there is virtually no hose at all for the ball to be struck with, there is still more surplus of pains to be devoted to strength and direction.

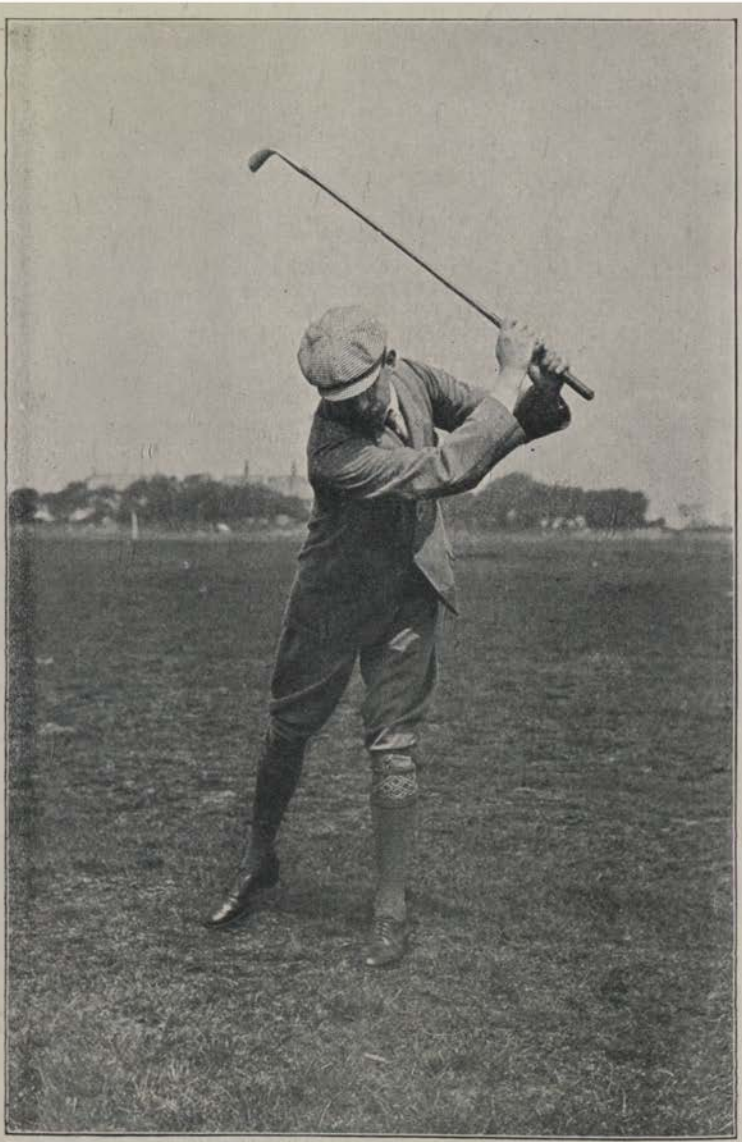
But this is not to be understood as giving the whole account of Mr. Fairlie's wonderful approaching. Mercifully, he is not always so deadly. Yet he is always a fine player with all his clubs—fine driver, fine approacher, fine putter. He has not been as assiduous as some in taking part in every great competition that is going, but his average of success is high; and quite lately, in the spring of 1898, he played two matches with Taylor at Wimbledon, where Taylor is at home, and halved both of them. This is great work. In partnership with his brother, Mr. W. E. Fairlie, the two

have won foursomes against very strong conbinations, and for a long while were able to say that they had never been beaten. As a band of brothers, indeed, the Fairlies would be bad to beat. There are Mr. Ogilvy Fairlie, late captain of the Royal and Ancient Club, Captain Henry Fairlie, who plays chiefly in Jersey, and Mr. Reginald Fairlie—all fine golfers. Their father—Colonel J. O. Fairlie of Coodham, hard by Prestwick—was a noted golfer in the palmy days of 'Old Tom' Morris and of Allan Robertson, so that the brothers breathed in the love of golf in childhood.

In the illustration that excuses this notice Mr. Frank Fairlie is seen at the finish of a style of approach stroke which he has made peculiarly his own. Most of us play our approaches with a slight curve in the air from the left to the right, following the maxim of the late Mr. George Glennie, 'Always pitch your iron shots to the left of the hole.' But Mr. Frank Fairlie seems rather by preference to play his approaches with a slight pull, making them come in at the finish from right to left. If this is not his normal manner of approach, it can at least be safely said that he has the stroke always at command when he wants it. It would be interesting, if we could discover it, to see how this stroke is played, but its methods are rather elusive, and Mr. Fairlie does not seem very well able to explain them. He will show you the shot in action over and over again, as often as you please, but when you come to speak of the 'how,' the way in which it is done, that is another pair of shoes altogether.

But from the accompanying picture we get at all events some little idea of it. You may look at this picture, and you may compare it with the portrait of Mr. Pease that follows, and which shows that player also at the end of a half iron shot. There is a deal of difference between the two. But, leaving other points of difference for the moment, you may notice very particularly one thing, that Mr. Fairlie's club is pointing away out from his body, and much lower down than Mr. Pease's club; and again, it is evident how this has

MR. FRANK FAIRLIE, AT FINISH OF LONG APPROACH STROKE.



Mr. M. Pease, at Finish of Half Iron Shot.

come to pass, for Mr. Fairlie's arms are much lower down and his hands much closer in to the body than Mr. Pease's. But, finally and most important, there is a great difference in the way the club is gripped. Mr. Fairlie's right hand over his left, pointing the club away to the left of him, seems to be pointing out to the ball, as it were, the curve from right to left that it is meant to take, and that it cruelly often does take, according to my own experience of the matter at Nairn. Comparing the positions of the heads of the two clubs, too, Mr. Fairlie's and Mr. Pease's, after due allowance made for the eccentric shape of Mr. Fairlie's, it will be seen that the Fairlie club is more turned over, its face more towards the ground, than that of the other, although the latter has gone so much further up. The stroke, the curve from right to left at the finish, is accomplished, so far as I can make out (though I have no idea how to put the stroke into practice), by turning the wrists so that the knuckles of the right hand come uppermost just at the moment that the ball is being struck, and by bringing the club round the body rather than up over the shoulder at the finish. And if this may sound a very queer account of it, it will have to stand, for it is the best that my ignorance is able to suggest. But there is a chance of some more adequate explanation of it, for it is a stroke that Mr. Hilton has in his bag, so perhaps in his chapter he will let it out of the bag. It is a stroke, as it seems to me, that is peculiarly useful for approaching against the wind. It keeps the ball low as a rule, and yet does not let it run far after pitching. When the wind is blowing from the player's left to right, across the line of approach, it is especially useful, for if you then play with the ordinary curve from the left it is very hard to know what will happen to your ball, because, so, it will virtually be pitching and running down wind. But if you can put on the curve from right to left you will then be pitching the ball virtually against the wind, and it does not need any very accomplished wizard to tell you what a much easier problem that presents to you. So

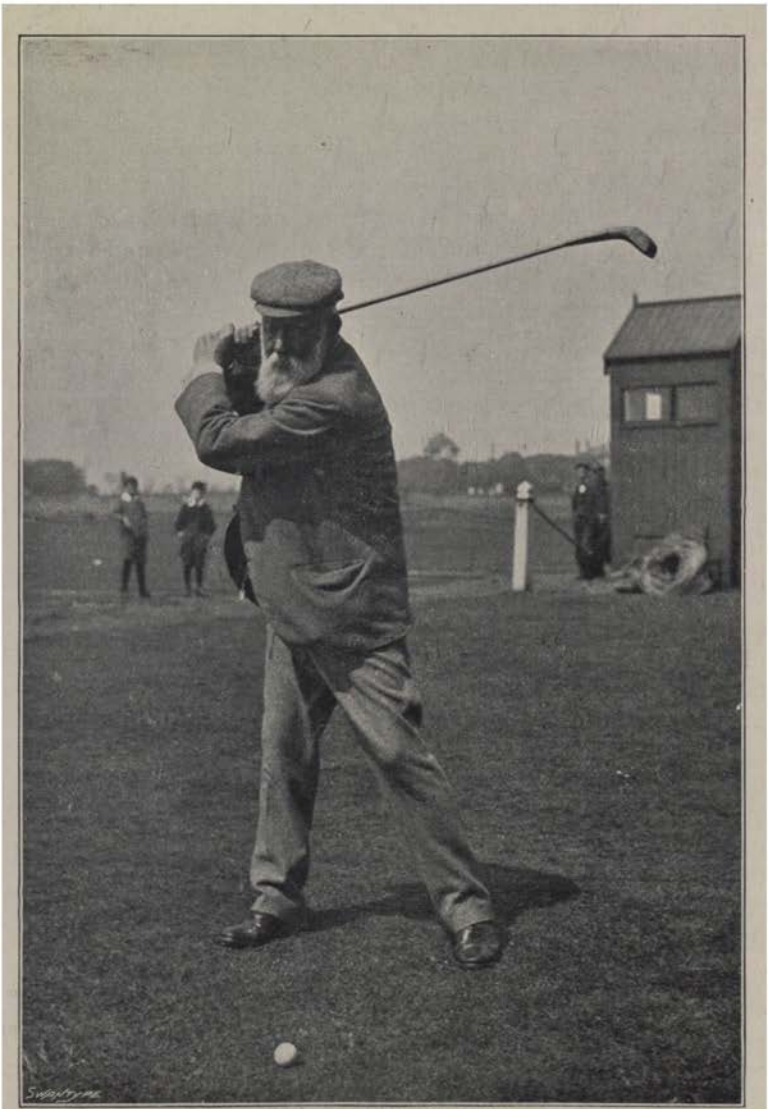
far as I have seen, only Mr. Fairlie and Mr. Hilton are perfect masters of this most useful mode of approach, the former playing it with his patent weapons and the latter with his ordinary mashie or irons. The latter past master can also get the same effect on an approach stroke played with his brassy.

The world would have heard a good deal more of Mr. Frank Fairlie as a golfer if he had not happened to pass several of the best years of his golfing life in Ceylon, where he kept his game up, indeed, but could of course take no part in competitions at home.

After saying so much in favour of the Fairlie iron clubs, it might be expected that I should certainly use them and recommend every one to do the same; but I do neither. With so many points in their favour it would be strange indeed if they did not appear the best kind of iron club to put into a beginner's hands, and for him to continue using throughout his golfing life. From his point of view they must be the best clubs possible. But we are not all beginners, though all of us now and then play as if we were, and for those who have grown used to a certain kind of iron club—the ordinary kind—it would be doubtful policy to change it for a strange species of weapon. For all that, many a good golfer, besides Mr. Fairlie himself, has made the change and seems the better for it; and more than one—J. Rowe, the professional to the Ashdown Forest Club, is a striking instance—carries a Fairlie driving mashie for forcing the ball out of a bad cup, and yet plays the rest of the iron game with clubs of the common kind. Whence it is evident enough that the use of the one sort does not necessarily put out the hand and eye for the successful use of the other.

THOMAS MORRIS

It is time to close this portrait gallery with the likeness of one of the most remarkable men—best of men and best of



TOM MORRIS AT TOP OF SWING.

golfers—that ever missed a short putt, Mr. Thomas Morris, known to all the golfing world, and to many who are no golfers, as 'Old Tom.' He has been written of as often as a Prime Minister, he has been photographed as often as a professional beauty, and yet he remains, through all the advertisement, exactly the same, simple and kindly.

We may look at this picture of him that shows him at the top of his swing, and may learn from it something of the secret of that golfing skill that put him four times at the head of the list in the play for the open championship—namely, in 1861, 1862, 1864, and 1867; but what no study of that or any other moment of the swing can show us is the virtue by which he has become that which he is—'Old Tom,' to all the golfing world, of fame to equal Prime Ministers and professional beauties. The virtue which has given him this position—which he has certainly never sought, and does not seem greatly to value—is, of course, moral and mental, not muscular. It is not to say that if he had not had the physical gifts to make him four times champion, and had he not perpetuated his golfing fame by the unique successes of 'Young Tommy,' his son, these gifts of temperament would have been equally conspicuous. They might have remained unobserved by the world, known only to those few who were about him. But his successes in playing the game brought him into a position where they were invaluable and where they were truly valued.

From a 'character sketch' of 'Old Tom's' life, supposed to be from his own mouth, but really the work of that clever writer and good golfer the late Mr. Patrick Alexander, and by him given to Mr. Arthur Balfour for use in the Badminton book on golf, I gather that 'Old Tom' was born at St. Andrews on June 16, 1821. He was made apprentice to Allan Robertson as a ball-maker, at the age of eighteen, and worked in his shop for eleven years. The mention of the great name of this worthy, Allan Robertson, at once suggests some reflections and comparisons. It was an article of faith

with many old golfers that Allan Robertson was the best player that had ever handled club, and equally, I think, they would have deemed it impious to doubt that he was better than any that ever would handle club in the future. No less than this was their faith in him. Now Allan Robertson died in 1859. On that doleful day a contemporary wrote: 'They may toll the bells and shut up the shops at St. Andrews, for their greatest is gone.' If 'Old Tom' came to Allan when he was eighteen and was with him eleven years—that is to say, from 1839 to 1850—it is an amazing thing that the two should never have had a match together. Yet such seems to have been the case. And 'Old Tom,' most modest of men, has more than hinted to the writer that any reluctance to put their comparative merits to the test was not on his side. It was not that great matches were not the 'mode'—they were eminently the 'mode' in those days that preceded the institution of the championship. Thus, in 1843 ('being then twenty-eight years old,' as Mr. Everard says, a chronology that does not agree with that of Mr. Alexander, given above, but is perhaps more trustworthy), Tom was playing a twenty-round match and winning it handsomely against Willie Dunn. And six years later Tom and Allan played a match on three greens—St. Andrews, Musselburgh, and North Berwick—against the brothers Dunn, and won the match after being four down and eight to play, at which point, we are told, odds of twenty to one on the Dunns were freely offered. The St. Andrews pair thus won the stakes, 400*l.*, on the match, as well as the long odds. These facts are worth noticing, if for nothing else, by way of showing that 'Old Tom' was one of the foremost figures in the golfing world, and constantly playing matches, in the time of Allan Robertson's prime, so that there was no chronological difficulty about their meeting in single contest. After all, if Allan was loth to put the matter to the issue, we cannot blame him much—should rather applaud him, seeing that he was a professional and not an amateur golfer. For

it is evident that he had nothing to gain if he beat Tom. As it was, the papers said 'their greatest was gone' at his death, and they could not have said more in any case; whereas, had he been beaten by Tom, they might have said a deal less. So at that let us leave it; but the fact remains that if Allan was their greatest, it was a greatness that he had never proved at Tom's expense.

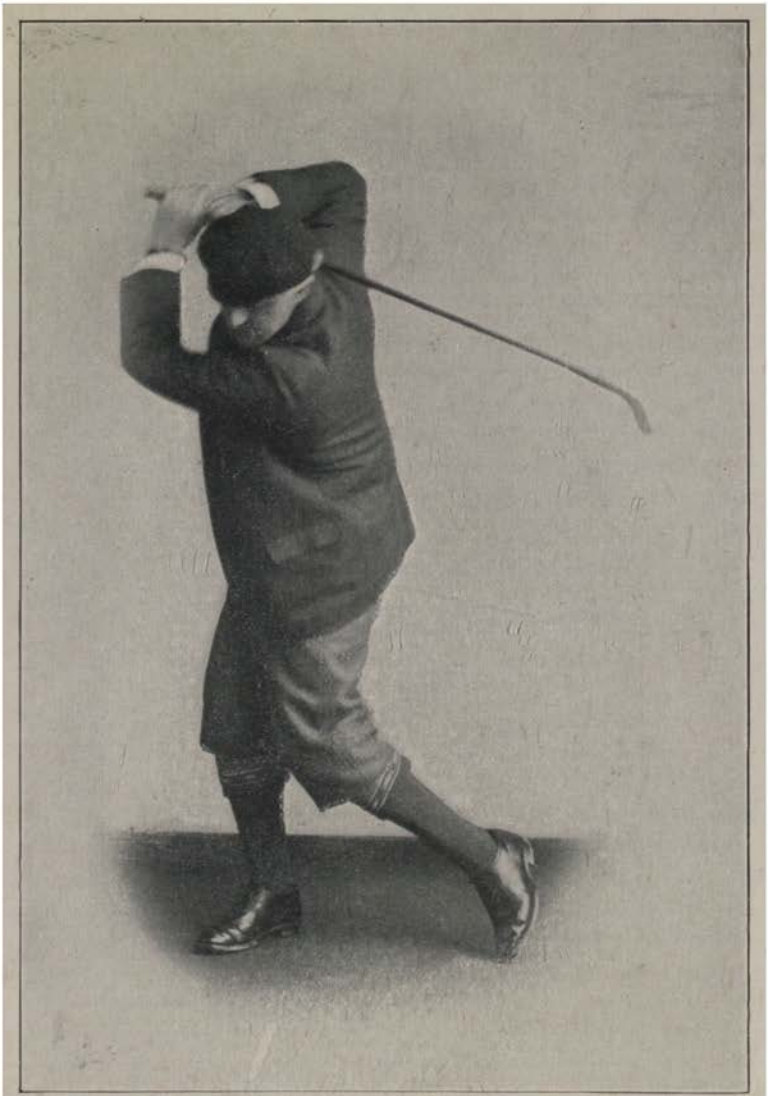
'I left Allan,' says Tom in Mr. Alexander's version of his autobiography, 'to keep the green at Prestwick, and was there fourteen years.' Then, three years after Allan's death—which would make it 1862—he came to St. Andrews, and has been there ever since. During the last years of his time at Prestwick the Open Championship belt was given by the Prestwick Club, and to Prestwick all the best professionals of the day used to go yearly to play for it. Prestwick from 1860 to 1872 was the single green on which the championship was played. In the first year of its institution—that is to say, in 1860—Willie Park won, beating Tom by a single stroke; but Tom was the winner of both the next two years. Then, in 1863, Park won again, and in 1864 again Tom. In 1865 the winner is a new man, Andrew Strath of St. Andrews. In 1866 Park won his third and last victory, and the following year, for the fourth time, Tom won. After this for five years (in one of which there was no competition) 'Old Tom's' son, 'Young Tommy,' entered on his wonderful career of victory; and by the time of his sad and premature death 'Old Tom' was truly an old man. Much trouble had been his portion, and new names begin to appear on the championship roll.

And in the meantime, as we have seen, Tom had moved to St. Andrews. His talents had marked him out for the post left vacant by the death of Allan Robertson; and it is in this post that his wonderful qualities have made themselves known and have endeared him to all that have been associated with him. His unfailing courtesy, kindliness, tact, and perfect temper have kept all the various interests, that

are a little apt to run counter to each other at St. Andrews, jogging along without friction. Town clubs, students' clubs, and Royal and Ancient, all have done, like good boys, what 'Old Tom' has told them to do all these years—has told them with such a way of telling that they had not the least idea they were being ordered about—Tom also not precisely understanding what sort of a tyrant he was; and so they have all gone along together in friendly wise, as if shamed into mutual friendliness by the perfect gentleness of the old man, their common mentor.

Tom can play a good game still. Until six or seven years ago he could be relied on to play a first-class game; and it is only some three years ago that he ceased to take part in the championship play. As for 'the way it was done,' that may be more or less seen from the portrait. Old man though he is, his swing has not altered much within the writer's remembrance. It is just as it used to be. He too, like one or two others of the most perfect and most successful golfers that we have referred to, has been guilty all his life of the amiable weakness of missing short putts. In this connection there is a good old story to be told; but it is so old that, good as it is, I shall forbear to retell it.

'A sound player throughout' is the criticism that one would be inclined to apply regarding Tom's game, as I have known it, in his later years—always with the exception of his unfortunate weakness in the short putt. There is a great deal of body swing about his driving stroke. It is rather a slow swing, the kind of swing that permits a man to use rather a supple club. Tom's clubs are supple and flat in the lie, and his swing is a flat one, rather of the 'auld wife cuttin' hay' style, according to Bob Martin's description of his own fine driving manner—generally sending the ball away with a fine flat trajectory that gives it a good run. It is a style of drive that I should have imagined more suited to the long flats of St. Andrews than to the mountainous Prestwick, for Prestwick was always mountainous, even before the days of its



MR. HORACE HUTCHINSON, AT TOP OF DRIVE.

extension. Nevertheless it was at Prestwick that 'Old Tom' learned a vast deal of his golf, and at Prestwick that he earned his greatest golfing laurels. The fine body swing and the fine timing of the moment for letting that swing have its full effect, are the best qualities, as it seems to me, of his style. He has a fine, half-running, half-lofted, approach stroke with his iron which is very useful, perhaps especially useful for approaching the St. Andrews putting greens, which so often have a low bank before them. But yet, when all is said, I believe that we must look for the secret of his many and great successes less in any muscular adjustments and methods than in that unruffled serenity of temper that has made him both the man and the golfer that he is.

His figure has a special interest in this picture gallery. Old Tom is perhaps the most remote point to which we can carry back our genealogical inquiries into the golfing style, so that we may virtually accept him as the common golfing ancestor, who has stamped the features of his style most distinctly on his descendants. 'Young Tommy' was his son. It would be singular indeed if so gifted a son had not taken some of his methods from so gifted a father, and on the style of 'Young Tommy' that of the younger generation of St. Andrews players has been more or less consciously modelled. Thence players have gone out, inspiration has gone out, to all the golfing world in these days of the modern 'boom' in golf, and the ultimate source of the inspiration, so far as we can trace it, is revealed to us in the person of 'Old Tom.'

Mr. HORACE HUTCHINSON

Yielding to the extremely injudicious advice of my publishers, I am giving two illustrations of the swing of Mr. Horace Hutchinson. Two points seem worthy of some little attention; in the first place, the bend of the right knee at the top of the swing. This is quite worth any

beginner's study. It always seems to me that such bending of the right knee must give an instability and inaccuracy to the whole swing. Certainly, almost, it is a weak point. Compare the swing executed with this yielding knee with the swing of those who have this knee-joint straightly braced when the club is at its height.

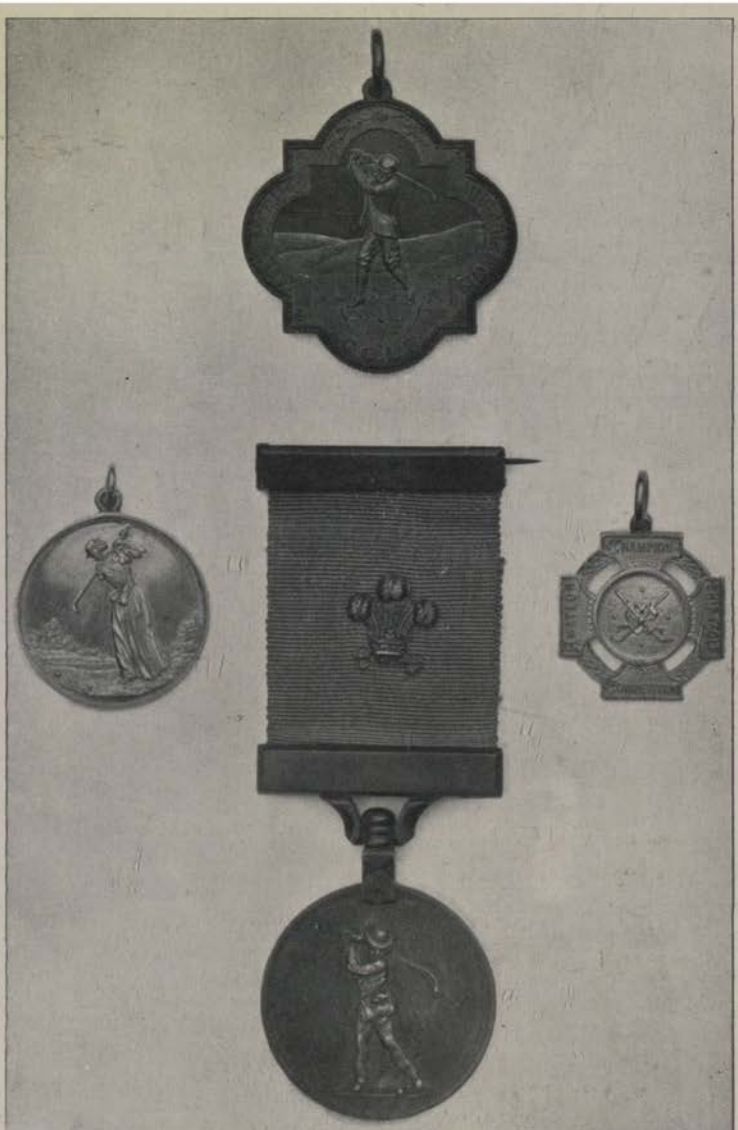
The second feature in this swing that seems to me to merit, though less pointedly, much reprobation is the inadequate turn of the body in course of the follow-on after the ball has been struck. The actual follow-on, with arms and body, is fairly well executed, but the turn of the body is checked, and freedom lost, by the fact that, though the heel of the right foot has come away from the ground, there has been no turning on the toe of that foot.

It is perhaps as useful in a portrait gallery to have illustrations of what is to be avoided as of what is worthy of imitation; and by way of some partial excuse for the swing that these two pictures show us it may be pleaded that it was acquired before people had begun to write these invaluable books which now teach us all to swing so gracefully and with such accurate results.

In addition to the foregoing portraits, I have ventured to give a reproduction from a photograph of a silver figure, modelled by myself, of a golfer at the top of the swing. It is not any exalted opinion of this figure as an artistic production that induces me to give it this publicity, but merely a wish to show what seems to me the ideal of the golfing swing. If I were making this model at the present time (it was made some four years ago), the only alteration I should make in it would be to lift the right elbow rather higher. At the time that I made it, it so happened that I was getting rather badly 'heckled' for the advice given in the Badminton book to keep this elbow high, and I yielded to that clamour so far as to depress the elbow in my ideal golfer. But now, since the study of the swings that I have made in course of collecting this gallery, I find the elevated position of the

MR. HORACE HUTCHINSON, AT FINISH OF DRIVE.

AUTHOR'S IDEAL OF THE SWING.



AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP.

Ladies' Championship.

Amateur Championship
(older pattern.)

Medal from old die.

elbow supported by so many of the brightest examples—as, for instance, by Mr. Edward Blackwell (the incarnated ideal of Mr. Everard)—that I find myself returning to something like my old opinion about it, and that opinion on the golfing swing in general is given, for the little that it may be worth, in the accompanying portrait of the silver man.

Beside this I would put the picture of an old medal, showing what an artificer of an older day—of the days when men played golf in bushy whiskers—thought about the golfing swing. The elbow is elevated here to a torture, but I have a suspicion that the worker merely copied his design from an old handbook of golf. At all events the picture of the medal, which is from a die many decades old, gives a notion of the ideal swing according to older judgments. The comparison is interesting, and may possibly be useful.

The other medal, of which a picture is also given, is a much more modern affair, being one of those given to the two defeated semi-finalists in the amateur championship tournament. In this it is seen that the right elbow is so far depressed that, though its exact position is not easy to make out, it could be safely said that the artificer did not deem the elbow above the height of the hand to be the ideal at which he should aim.

LADY MARGARET SCOTT

I think we may regard Lady Margaret Scott (I propose to speak of the lady under the title by which she won her remarkable series of victories—she is now Lady Margaret Hamilton Russell) as the greatest champion in golf that we have ever had in Great Britain. In Great Britain, one should say advisedly, for in America another lady has been equally pre-eminent, winning the 'Women's Championship' (as, with a pleasant homeliness and simplicity, they style it) of the United States each year of its institution. Lady Margaret Scott began to compete for our ladies' championship in the

first year of its institution. She won it. The next year she competed, and won again; and the third year she repeated this victory once more—and never played for the big event again.

It is a wonderful record. We have nothing to match its invincibility in the records of our masculine championships. Lady Margaret Scott stands alone. Not only did she win thus, thrice successively, but in no single match of all these contests was she seriously tackled, save once—by Mrs. Ryder Richardson, at Portrush. This lady was several holes up on the champion at the turn, but the latter—at the crisis—found her best game again, and won a hard match. With this exception, she has never been hard held at all. Thereafter, it scarcely needs to say that she is a very fine player—the writer is inclined to think the finest lady player he has seen. Since she won the championship thus thrice successively, it might be thought that this was a fact beyond the need of proving; but it is not altogether so. Lady Margaret Scott won gloriously, she was a class better than most of her opponents—and this is a statement that it takes a brave man to make and sign his name to it—but Lady Margaret started with a great advantage. On the course in Stowell Park, an excellent nine-hole green, she played golf constantly, with her father and brothers, from a child. The double or triple advantage is obvious. The links was at the door of her home, she began at the right age, all her practice was with those who were likely to begin with greater natural aptitude for games than herself. They took up the game in the proper, correct spirit, trying to play it as well as they could—a spirit in which country-house golf is often lacking—the result being that Lord Eldon himself plays a most capable game, the sons are in the first class of golfers, and the daughter was, for a while, in a class alone.

She was in a class alone, at least, of those that competed in the ladies' championship during its first years. It is a very great pity that Lady Margaret was no longer playing

LADY MARGARET SCOTT, AT TOP OF SWING.

LADY MARGARET SCOTT, AT FINISH OF SWING.

when the Misses Orr came on the field of the championship. The writer had the pleasure of playing with the Misses Orr at the time that Lady Margaret Scott was champion, and at that time it was his opinion that, had they met, Lady Margaret Scott would have had the better of the battle, though by a very small margin. But it is generally understood that the Misses Orr (one speaks of them in the plural because, though one was first and the other second in the championship meeting at Gullane, yet these positions might as likely as not be reversed at their next meeting) have improved their game more than a little in the last two or three years, and would at least have been able to give Lady Margaret Scott a very hard fight for first honours. Unfortunately, such a meeting is not at all likely to take place, for the latter lady appears to have left the championship list, entirely and for ever, with a record absolutely undefeated.

It is a wonderful position, and these illustrations give some remote idea of the manner in which it was achieved. It is on illustrations No. I. and II. that the studious attention should be bestowed. The third is introduced only as an example of the eccentricities in which genius now and again indulges itself, and also to put it in comparison with the style of the late young Hugh Kirkaldy, of whom Lady Margaret Scott was in some measure a pupil. There is this of similarity, that while young Hugh's is about the longest swing behind the back that we ever saw achieved by any male golfer, this eccentric example of Lady Margaret Scott's style is an illustration of the greater suppleness of the feminine figure, the club coming round without extraordinary effort further than a man would be able to get it without risk of dislocating something. Not the least notable point of the performance is that the lady, as we see, has easily accomplished this terrific length of back swing almost entirely by the turn of the body and shoulders, the left foot has hardly come away from the ground at all; whereas, in young Hugh Kirkaldy's swing—though he was remarkably supple, and

the swing is remarkably long—he has only been able to achieve his comparatively far less long swing by bringing the left heel right away off the ground and letting the left knee 'knuckle in' very far. It is wonderful, too, how the lady, without an effort, is keeping her eye fixedly on the ball.

This *tour de force*, however, is an object for our wonder and admiration—scarcely, even for the youngest and most supple of us, should it be an object of our imitation. Such an object, worthy of all study, Lady Margaret's style perfectly affords in the illustrations numbered I. and II. No. I. is singularly like the style of young Hugh, I think, and it is not easy to pay it a higher meed of praise. For all that was dashing, fearless, and fascinating, I know no style to beat, scarcely one to equal, that of poor young Hugh. If it erred at all, indeed, it was on the side of being too dashing, too fearless. And yet, no one could put the long shots close up beside the hole more accurately than he—this was a part of his fearlessness. And just the same dashing qualities we may trace in these illustrations of the thrice champion lady. The left foot, as noticed before, is not taken so far from the ground as is Hugh Kirkaldy's; but this was not needful, for the club has come as far round and down as his—fully far enough. The grip of the hand, you may see, is strong and determined—there is no faint-hearted work of light-fingering the club here. It seems to be gripped well home in the palm of both hands, after the manner of one who has no fears of not being able to bring the stroke well through, and get the follow-on, if the club be thus held. It is something like the full-fisted grip of Mr. John Ball himself. And certainly, when we look at the picture of the finish of the stroke, it appears that there was not the slightest reason for any lack of confidence about the follow-on. The stroke has been well enough carried through; it is not possible to doubt that. The club has gone right back again over the shoulder, so that we should say that the club-head had come

LADY MARGARET SCOTT, AT TOP OF SWING.
(Occasional, and exaggerated length.)

THE LATE HUGH KIRKALDY.

very nearly to the exact point it had reached at the highest of the swing, having described, as nearly as might be, a complete circle. The same supple swing, that could bring the club down behind the back so far and with so little effort before the stroke, has been of fully equal value in carrying the stroke well through after the ball was struck.

And though the ball has been struck away, there is a great point to be noticed—the lady is still looking at the place where it lately was. In spite of the thoroughness of the follow-on, allowing the club-head to describe its completed circle, this length of follow has not been allowed to carry off the eyes from their steadfast gaze at the ball, and at the spot it lately occupied. There is no prospecting of a dubious event; the event is made a certainty, and the study of its results has to follow.

For my own part I can scarcely see a point to criticise in Lady Margaret Scott's style. It appears to me as good as one could ideally make it. But for all that, it is not quite the style that one would recommend a tiro to imitate, unless that tiro happened to be of quite childish years, in which case it would probably do its imitating unconsciously. For those of riper years the style, though fascinating, is like that of the late young Hugh Kirkaldy, on which we might almost fancy it modelled, too dashing, too unrestrained, for safe imitation. We want something a little slower (for, for us, that will mean surer) in our examples. But certainly this is a picture that it will do us good to study now and again—at those times when we feel ourselves too fast bound up in rules and traditional rheumatism. If we want an encouragement to let ourselves go, and have a good free swing at the ball, *for pleasure*, let us have a glance at this style of Lady Margaret Scott or young Hugh Kirkaldy, and it will be impossible to play the next stroke in a cramped style. Whether we shall hit the ball is another—perhaps a minor—matter.

The great pull that Lady Margaret seemed to have over almost all her competitors in the ladies' championships lay

in her power of getting the ball well away with the second shot. She could pick the ball off an indifferent, unsympathetic lie with a brassy certainly better than any other lady I have ever had the luck to see. Others might drive from the tee equally well; it was in the play through the green that she beat them. Her iron play was good, but not remarkably so, and if her game had a weak point it was in the putting. But then, as 'Old Tom' remarked in this very connection, not without a sly twinkle of personal significance in his eye, 'every really good golfer putts badly.'

To this maxim I would add a rider, namely, that it is quite possible to putt badly without being a good golfer.

MISS AMY PASCOE

The best possible pen portrait of Miss Amy Pascoe as a golfer is that which is unconsciously supplied by the lady herself in the chapter on ladies' golf that she has been kind enough to write for this book. It shows several things about ladies' golf; firstly, the earnest—very earnest, so earnest as now and again to raise a smile—spirit in which they have learned to approach the game. They treat it with all that respectful deference that is the ideal attitude of the golfer of the old school, now nearly defunct, and yet that school would have raised eyes of holy horror at the very notion of ladies playing on the long links at all. That they should be permitted only to score was a great concession to make to persons of such levity of manner and volubility of tongue. Such was the conception of the old-world golfer, and it seems a curious irony of fate that those who are now upholding his traditions are the very ones towards whom his point of view was so intolerant. A second point that cannot fail to strike us in the paper contributed by Miss Pascoe is the great value that ladies put on the matches played in teams; and the third point is the subordination of all the chief events in the ladies' golfing year to the

Miss Amy Pascoe, at Top of Swing.

central authority of the Ladies' Golfing Union. I think that we of the inferior sex may take a good deal of suggestion from these three points. It is possible, of course, to overdo the earnestness and 'solemnity,' as the old Scotsman phrased it, of the game; but it is even more possible and certainly more frequent to err on the other extreme of treating it with too great levity, as if it were a game of—— but perhaps it is better not to specify. And certainly it is a good feature of the ladies' attitude towards the game that they put such store on the team matches. This is a healthier tendency than the undue value that we are so prone to give to competitions, and the team match has this advantage over disconnected singles and foursomes, that it alleviates the individualism that is apt to make golf a very selfish game, the only argument against its superlative excellence that carries with it any weight. Finally, the manner in which the central authority of the Ladies' Golfing Union regulates all the principal matters that are of general interest to golf-playing ladies is worthy not only of our admiration but our envy. Long have we, hampered by long-grown custom, sighed for some such authority, and eventually have but evoked some unsubstantial phantom of it.

There once was a time when even persons of more modern ideas than the old-world golfer used to hold just his views on the matter of golfing ladies. That, the general view of male golfers, has become entirely changed, yet without inconsistency, for the change has been in the lady golfer herself. Formerly she was endowed with most of the qualities that the old-world golfer found to condemn in her—voluble at the wrong moment, with no intelligent appreciation of the game, or, if appreciative at all, of its putting strokes merely. Now she has changed all that, as we have seen. In her appreciation of the qualities necessary for good golf and her power of concentration on the game she is equal to the best golfer among men; the length of her drives, the fashion of her approach, and the *finesse* of her putting have put her

into such a position as to enable her to say to many a male golfer who respects his own game most highly: 'Do you tell me ladies ought not to play on the long links? I will challenge you to a match.' And she is capable of enforcing her arguments most drastically by beating him. Thereafter there can surely be nothing more to say by way of criticism. She has established her full right to play on the long links on equal terms with men.

The wonder is that she does not insist on this right more often; and it is really the highest evidence of the modesty with which she bears the consciousness of the position she has won for herself that she does not strive to thrust herself into competitions hitherto restricted to men, or take part in their matches unless at a special invitation. We have never yet seen a lady entering her name for the amateur or the open championship, though we know of no rule by which she is excluded, and though we do know ladies who would have a better chance of gaining either championship than some of those male golfers that have entered for them.

After so much, by way of preface, in regard to lady golfers as a class, let us consider for a moment Miss Pascoe's special merits as its representative. Her victory in the championship was won over the long course at Hoylake, though it is only just to say that the tees had been brought forward so as to make the holes a good deal shorter than the lengths at which they stand for the masculine championships and for the medal meetings of the Royal Liverpool Golf Club. Until the year of Miss Pascoe's victory the ladies' championship had seemed to rest under a spell, Lady Margaret Scott had been three times victorious—champion in each of three years of the institution of the tournament. But this year Lady Margaret Scott had retired from the contest, satisfied with her laurels, and has never since taken a part in it. It is not too much to say that the immense prestige which this lady had thus gained, in addition to her splendid golfing power, made it very difficult for any other lady to attempt

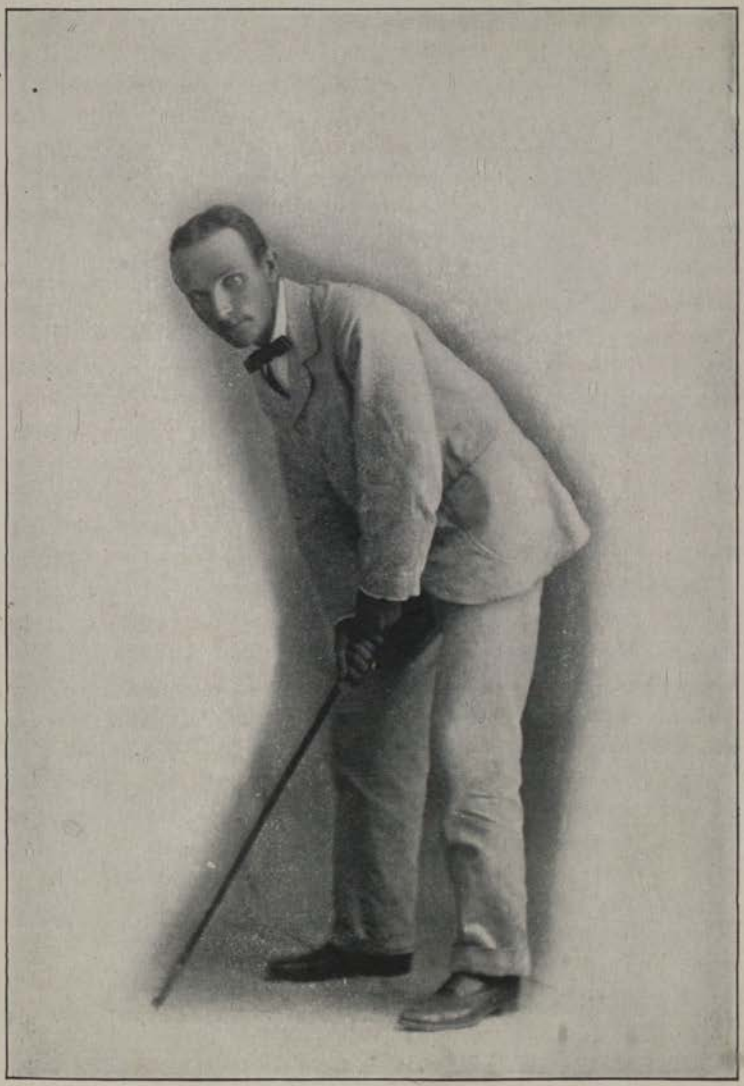
CHAPTER VI

GOLF IN THE UNITED STATES

By H. J. Whigham

The main difference between golf in America and golf in England is that one is artificial and the other is natural. The climate and soil of the United States are such that they do not admit of the perfect natural courses which abound around the coast of England and Scotland. In a few places like Long Island and the coast of New Jersey there is something approaching to the sandy belt which has been left by the receding seas on the shores of Great Britain, but even there the long summer droughts leave the grass thin and wiry, so that the rolling turf of St. Andrews is practically unknown. This great and essential obstacle has not, however, prevented the growth of the game in America. The national characteristics of energy and enterprise have, after a few years, solved the difficulty in no unsatisfactory manner. It is nearly ten years since the game was first thought of and played on this side of the Atlantic. But the real development of golf belongs to the last half-decade, and looking at it from that point of view the growth of the sport in America and the extraordinary ingenuity by which nearly every shortcoming has been conquered are most remarkable. The consequence is that a sort of golf has been developed here which is practically unknown either in England or Scotland.

In the older countries the player has to choose between a journey to the seaside and a very indifferent field for his favourite pursuit. With all the good will in the world, it is



MR. J. H. WHIGHAM, ADDRESSING FOR APPROACH. I.

impossible to assert that there is any inland course, either in England or Scotland, which in any way approaches the links of Sandwich or St. Andrews.

In America, on the other hand, courses have been built up in the last few years which, although inferior in a few respects to the genuine seaside courses, do afford not only an enjoyable game, but a real test of golfing ability.

This consummation has not been reached without a vast expense of money and a great deal of mental and physical labour. It was a long time before the real idea of the game could be instilled into the minds of those who had the charge of the various courses in the east of America. In nearly every case the holes were exactly the wrong distance apart, the hazards were badly placed, the putting greens were either extremely bad or far too small, and anything from a stone quarry to a pigeon trap was considered a legitimate feature of a good course.

It is not so long ago that a writer, of no mean ability as a penman, described in glowing terms the sporting qualities of links in which ploughed fields, railway tracks, and wooden pavilions added new elements of interest to the old Scotch game.

It is indeed extraordinary that with the large percentage of Scottish business men throughout America there should not have been a wider-spread knowledge of the true requirements of a national pastime. It remained, however, for one or two men like Mr. C. B. Macdonald, of the Chicago Golf Club, and Mr. John Reed, of the St. Andrews Club at Yonkers, to appeal again and again to the intelligence of American devotees in favour of courses laid out with some knowledge of what golf links ought to be. The efforts of a few men like these—combined with the growing impetus which has been given to the game by its universal popularity, both among older men and among college undergraduates—have at last succeeded in producing what is essentially a good American golf links. Even to-day there are very few such

courses of the normal eighteen holes. But there are certainly one or two in the east, and two in the neighbourhood of Chicago, which, as far as length, sporting qualities, and good condition go, would compare very favourably with some of the best of the seaside courses of Great Britain.

One misses, no doubt, the keen salt air of St. Andrews or Prestwick, the sea breezes, and the beautiful seascapes of the Firth and Clyde; but, ozone and natural beauty apart, they allow ample scope for good and enjoyable golf.

But here comes in the question of expense. It is not too much to say that before a good eighteen hole course has been secured, put into first-rate condition, and ornamented with a suitable club-house, a sum approaching a hundred thousand dollars must first have been spent. It must be remembered that for a golf club to be successful in a commercial country like America it must be situated within easy reach of a big city. In other words, the two hundred acres required for the purpose will cost a good round sum in purchase-money.

If possible, and admitting always that the purchasing committee knows what it is about, the land thus procured will be a piece of open pasture land with good turf and no trees. Unfortunately that is not always the case; whether it is because open pasture land is not easily available, or because would-be golfers have a lingering love for forest scenery. There is one case at least—that of Morristown in New York, which is now a championship course—where many acres of woodland had to be ruthlessly rooted up, ploughed and sown, before the necessary eighteen holes could be laid out. And in the earlier days of golf in America such cases were not rare. The game was taken up tentatively, with a slight feeling of suspicion, so that men investing in property for the purpose had always an eye to its real estate value, which might at a future date be realisable by cutting the land up into building lots should the popularity of golf be on the wane. For building lots in desirable suburbs trees were of course essential, and that is one of the reasons why so many courses all

MR. H. J. WHIGHAM, ADDRESSING FOR APPROACH. 2.

over the country were studded with picturesque trees and groups of wood which added greatly to the beauty of the landscape, but were certainly of no real advantage to the development of the game.

Now, however, that golf has come to stay, as we say in America, these objectionable features have been in great part removed at the expense of many misgivings and much sorrow. Patches of primæval forest have given way to smooth turf and an open course.

The cost of purchase is only the beginning of the many expenses which must be incurred before a golf club is upon a firm basis. First and foremost, a large well-appointed club-house must be fitted out with all the modern conveniences of a first-class hotel. This is necessary for two reasons. In the first place it entices men of money who care little about games and a great deal about their personal comfort, but whose purses are a very solid consideration in dealing with so expensive a pastime. In a few months they will probably be far keener about their customary 18-holes than the quality of their dinner, but in the meantime they must be propitiated and brought into the fold.

In the second place, golf without the help of the fairer sex never will be successful in America. Women make up a very large portion of the golfing community, and not only must their needs be amply cared for, but their presence must in every way be sought for and encouraged. Herein the contrast between a Scotch and an American golf club is too obvious to require further emphasis. Moreover, in nine cases out of ten your club is not confined to the pursuit of golf alone, but is a 'Country Club' for the purpose of furthering the advancement of all out-of-door games, and it is not at all uncommon for golf, tennis, polo, and many lesser games to be played side by side on the grounds of the various 'Country Clubs' of America.

Then come the laying out of your ground, the providing of a complete water system, the building of bunkers, and

provision for the up-keep of your course—which, owing to the climatic conditions, is a very large item in the yearly expense. On inland courses there is no such thing hardly as a 'natural hazard,' with the exception of a brook or pond of water. Hedges, trees, marshes, stone quarries, and other obstacles which do duty upon the inland courses of Great Britain, and used to answer the same purpose in this country, are gradually being eliminated, because it is generally agreed that these are not proper features of a real golf links. And since they are not proper features, and, as is generally the case, money is no object, they are removed, in favour of the regulation sand bunker. Even long grass on the course is usually tabooed on the best links, because, although it may be a useful and legitimate hazard, the thick growth which comes in summer upon a good soil is so certain to lead to innumerable lost balls that other means of punishment have to be resorted to.

The great difficulty in making bunkers on inland courses lies in the enormous cost of making them large enough and keeping them filled with sand. There are also minor objections in the shape of their inartistic appearance and their capacity for holding water. The two latter objections are not so hard to overcome. By a little care in construction a bunker can be made, if not a thing of beauty, at least an inoffensive hole in the ground. The water difficulty can only be removed by a thorough system of drainage, and that has been generally resorted to by this time.

As for the size, it is of course mainly a matter of expense, and if you can once persuade the executive committee of your club that a small bunker is of little or no use whatever the money can generally be procured. The fact remains that there is hardly a course in the country as yet whose artificial bunkers are large enough to do away with a constant element of luck. Green committees seem to find it very difficult to harden their hearts and use the spade. Experience proves that a bunker which is intended to stop a hard-hit

Mr. J. H. Whigham Approaching, at End of Stroke.

ball must be at least forty feet wide and two feet deep. Then it should have a raised face on the further side. When it is considered that some thirty or forty of such bunkers stretching across the course in various shapes and directions have to be constructed on every inland links which lays claim to first-class honours, it will be seen that the permanent improvements which have to be embarked upon, even after your land is bought, are of no small importance. You will be fortunate, too, if you have not to lay and turf the majority of your putting greens. The natural sod of the rich pasture land, either on the New Jersey uplands or Western prairies, does well enough for brassy play through the green, but is far too coarse to admit of accurate putting. Indeed, it is only after many years of hard labour that you can make long grass approximate the fine velvety quality of the seaside article. Still, with good care and constant seeding, good putting greens are not difficult of attainment; but water is most of all necessary.

West of the Alleghanys, and in most cases on the eastern slopes, the rain in summer is so scarce that an elaborate system of water pipes must put every putting green beyond the reach of drought. The Chicago Golf Club, for instance, has a system by which a hundred thousand gallons can be put upon the course every day—that is to say, half an inch per diem on each putting green. And now that water systems for golf courses have been, after many experiments, brought to a state of perfection, there is no reason why the whole course, with the exception of the bunkers, should not be watered at least twice a week in summer. In some cases where there is a clay soil and the sun is apt to make the ground hard until it cracks, such a scheme will have to be carried out. This water system for putting greens has, I believe, been applied with the best results to the once threadbare turf of St. Andrews, and if it is beneficial on Scotch courses, where even in summer rain is usually plentiful, much more is it essential to courses in this country.

With plenty of water and good drainage it is not difficult, provided your soil is of a reasonable quality, to get perfect lies throughout the green in a short space of time; but to guard against the rigours of the winter and spring, when the severe frost of the Northern States breaks up the ground and spoils the best turf, it is often necessary, or at least beneficial, to protect your whole course, as far as possible, with a thick covering of straw. And here the advantage of the combined country club system comes in, for where there is a polo stable it is not difficult to get all the straw that is required at the end of the season.

In the early spring the grass, especially in its younger years, must be rolled over its entire length with a heavy horse or steam roller. Steam rollers have been used with good results, as this system obviates damage done to the turf and wet ground by the horses' hoofs.

As the summer advances, the growth of the grass will every season get beyond the control of any number of sheep. And indeed sheep have been generally discarded as being more nuisance than they are worth on American courses. This means that the whole ground must be cut on an average twice a week by means of close-cropping mowing machines, a task which in itself means a good deal of labour for horse and man. Altogether, you will be fortunate if, after all your permanent improvements have been made, you can keep your course in proper condition for less than five or six hundred dollars a month.

It would not be necessary to go into all these details of ways and means if the expenses of the game did not constitute a determining factor in the history of golf in America. Leaving aside the consideration that the ready way in which money is spent on all hands by men starting clubs in the vicinity of our big cities proves the zeal and enthusiasm with which the rise of golf in America has been attained, there has been up to the present time this rather unfortunate result. In order to play golf it has been necessary to join a

club, and golf clubs are very expensive amusements. For that reason golf hitherto, so far from being, as it is in England and Scotland, 'the poor man's game,' has actually become the privilege of the well-to-do. The natural consequence has been that for several years it was always regarded as more of a society fad than a real form of athletics. In this respect America has not been altogether unlike England. It was not so long ago that the pastime of Northern Britain was dismissed contemptuously by the Southerner with such epithets as 'Scotch croquet,' 'the old man's game,' and so on, but the case against golf was even stronger in this democratic country, where anything belonging exclusively to the richer classes is regarded with mistrust. In the last year or two, however, the aspect of things has changed considerably. The game has got into the colleges, and is now at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton regarded as a legitimate branch of athletics. In fact, it bids fair to rival the older sports in popularity. If that becomes the case the future of any game is assured. Next to a schoolboy, the college undergraduate is the most conservative being in the world. It is only ten years ago that the few Oxford men who struggled painfully around the swamps of Cowley Marsh in dead of winter were looked upon with the utmost contempt by cricketers, football players, and rowing men. Since then the prejudice has been overcome, but the universities were the last places in England to be affected by the golfing boom.

So it has been in America. The older men, possibly on account of their years and their inability to play baseball and football, took kindly to the milder pursuit, and it has only been more recently that Harvard and Yale undergraduates have come to the front in the tournaments of the year. The change was first marked at the amateur championship meeting held at Chicago in 1897, when Mr. Rossiter Betts, a Yale undergraduate, worked his way into the finals, defeating an ex-champion in the person of Mr. C. B. Macdonald. That was the beginning of the gigantic development which has

been brought about in college golf. And now that colleges are turning out year by year a whole host of golfing men into the country, it is perfectly safe to assert that the game which only a short time ago was hardly alluded to in the press except for the sake of sarcastic comment will in a short time become one of the most important of national pastimes.

Already golf has revolutionised the whole life of business men in America, and the term 'business men' includes nine-tenths of adult males capable of playing any game at all. It must be remembered that in America when a man leaves college he is almost cut off from any kind of athletic exercise. If for a few years he keeps up his football or baseball, it is done with much difficulty and some danger to life and limb. It is almost impossible in the midst of the great rush for the spoil to find time in which to keep up training for the severer forms of athletics. In any case a football career ought not to extend very much beyond the age of twenty-five. As for baseball, even though it were possible for a man who spends his eight hours a day in his down-town office, the fact that it has got so much nowadays into the hands of professionals has robbed it of most of its interest for amateurs after they leave college. Lawn tennis has never been very popular in America, and for some reason or other does not seem to fill the whole requirements as the sole form of exercise. Hunting is rare, and shooting in many cases entails a long trip. Polo has its devotees, but for obvious reasons it can never be a game for the many. It requires too many conditions. It is not unnatural, therefore, that when golf, after a year or two of desperate struggles, was forced upon the notice of the American public, it was very soon hailed with delight by all those who craved some rational form of exercise and had hitherto been unable to find it.

Barring the fact that the ground it should be played upon was difficult to acquire, it seemed to fill the blank in the ordinary life of the American citizen. It can be played

MR. J. A. TYNG, ADDRESSING FOR DRIVE.

by men of all ages; it can be enjoyed by good players and bad alike; above all, it can be brought within easy reach of the down-town office, but not so close that it does not give the tired business man a chance to get into the country, breathe an ampler air, and forget, in the vagaries of his first endeavours, the worries which form a constant element of business life in this country. At first the difficulties of securing a good course were hardly recognised, and therefore little felt. The first enthusiast who introduced the game into the West laid out a course with a Badminton book in one hand and clubs of extraordinary pattern in the other, over the tree-studded lawns which top the bluffs of Lake Michigan. Other beginnings were just as insignificant. It was a curious game for sane men to indulge in, but it gradually led to better things, and soon, with the help of Scotchmen, some notions of the real sport were inculcated in the minds of the enthusiastic, and although a year or two ago the condition of golf courses in this country seemed almost hopeless, it must be admitted in looking back over the three years' experience that the development has been extraordinarily rapid.

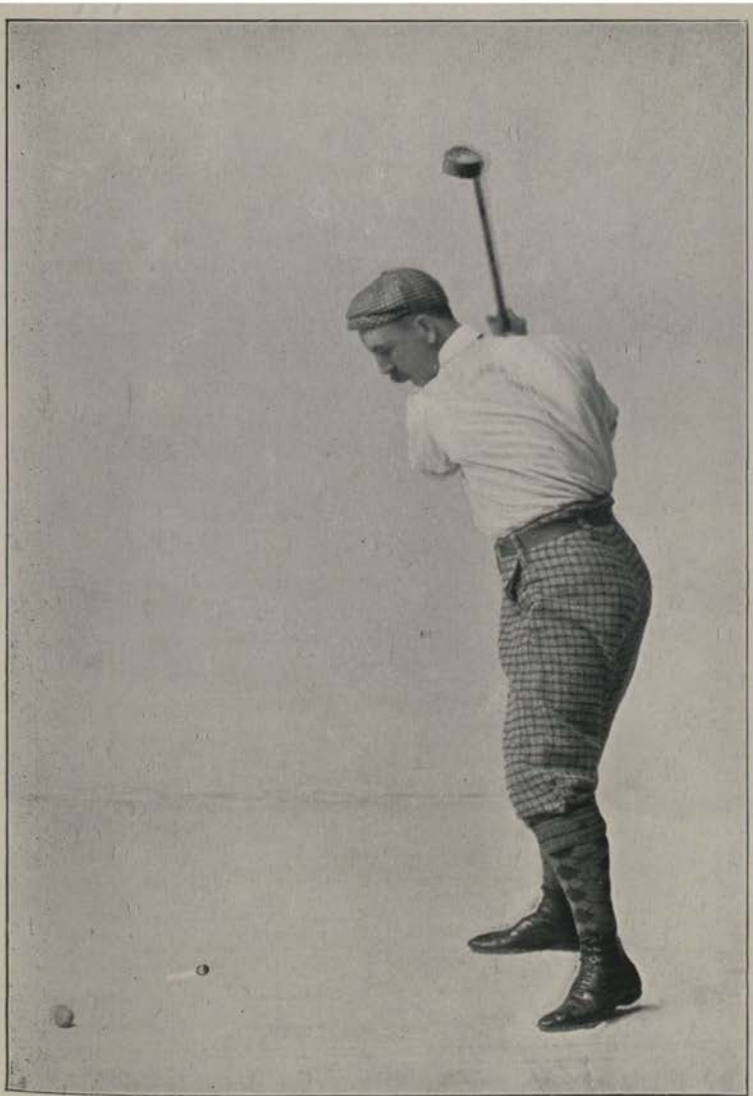
At this point it might be well to say just a word in tribute to the endeavours of one or two men who are responsible for this speedy growth.

Golf was really crystallised in America in the early months of the year 1895. A National Golf Association was formed under the presidency of the late Mr. Theodore Havermeyer, whose memory is kept green in the minds of every golfer and every sportsman in America. He had as Vice-Presidents Mr. Lawrence Curtis and Mr. C. B. Macdonald. It is to the latter that the greatest credit must be given in accounting for the way in which the game has improved within the last few years. Not only is Mr. Macdonald a fine player—he learned his game as a boy on the links of St. Andrews—but he has always been imbued with a keen sense of the best points of the game and the most sportsmanlike methods of

playing it, and for some time he was really the only man in America who was capable of laying out a course as it ought to be made. As late as 1897, when the championship meeting went to Chicago, the construction of the Wheaton course, for which Mr. Macdonald is responsible, was a revelation to many of the players who had journeyed from the east to take part in the competition. The result has been most beneficial upon the golf courses all over the country, and it is quite certain we shall never again have a national tournament held over a course which is not, at least, a fair test of golf.

The other members of that small committee were Mr. Parish, treasurer, Mr. H. O. Tallmadge, secretary.

It is not necessary here to go into the arguments for and against a ruling body to control a national game. There can be no doubt, at any rate, such a ruling body is in keeping with American institutions, even though at times its actions may be autocratic. By some happy chance the choice of the executive committee, which lay with the representatives of all the golf clubs in the Association, fell upon men who had an extraordinary aptitude for the task before them. It would have been very natural for American golfers, with their inventive faculties and youthful experience, to branch away from the older traditions of the game as played in Scotland. It is due to the rulings of the executive committee, and especially to the influence of the late Mr. Theodore Havermeyer, that such a falling away was prevented, and the result is that the rules under which the game is played are at the present moment, in spite of all objections to the code, precisely the same as those that govern players on the links of St. Andrews. But in the proper development of the game the American Association has not been backward. In interpreting the somewhat obscure St. Andrews code, the work of Mr. Lawrence Curtis and Mr. Macdonald has met with universal approval, both in America and in Great Britain. In this way great



Mr. J. A. Tyng, at Top of Drive.

service has been done to all golfers by clearing away a number of ambiguous points which were constantly leading to all sorts of disputes.

A word also might be said in reference to the conditions under which the contest for the amateur championship of the United States is held. These conditions, which have been gradually evolved, seem to provide a better test than any means yet employed anywhere else. The weeding-out process, by which players have to compete for the right of qualification, while it gets the field down to the reasonable limit of thirty-two, gives, however, a chance to every golfer who has a claim to recognition. After that each round of match play consists of thirty-six holes, which eliminates, as far as possible, the element of luck which is apt to creep in when only eighteen holes are played. Moreover, the system requires a certain excellence, not only in match playing but also in score playing, which, after all, is a proper department of the game.

Up to the present time the championship honours of the year have always fallen to players who have learnt their game in Scotland, and this applies both to the open and to the amateur events; but the reign of the Scotch player is likely to be of very short duration now that the game has become popular in the colleges of the country.

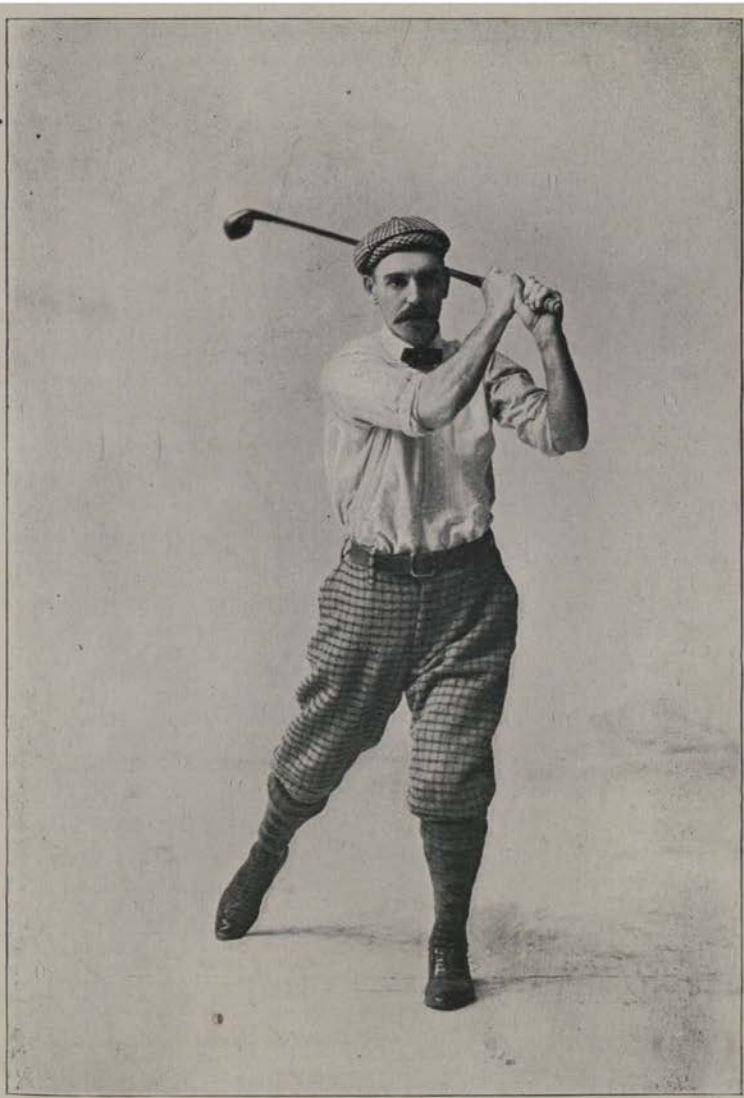
Every year the contest becomes more open, and although we have as yet few players who can compete on even terms with the best professionals in the country, the time is not far distant when some of the younger exponents may rival the performances of Mr. Hilton and Mr. John Ball in England by carrying off the open championship.

For a certain time it seemed as if a new style in golf was likely to be developed in America by men belonging to the baseball contingent who learnt the game later in life; but they answered very nearly to the converted cricketers of England. They play for the most part with a short, sometimes only a half, swing, and depend for success upon getting

the entire weight of the body into the stroke at the right moment. Among such players the best are, perhaps, Mr. J. A. Tyng, Mr. A. H. Fenn, Mr. Herbert Harriman, and Mr. H. Toler. It will be seen, however, that these players do not really represent a new class, but one which is likely to grow up in any country where men of athletic ability take to the game after their muscles are set. There is very little difference, for instance, between the style of Mr. Harriman and that of Mr. E. Buckland. This style, however, is not at all likely to supersede the more orthodox methods of the St. Andrews professionals, who, after all, dominate the field in this country. It is from the Scotch professionals that college boys learn their game, and in all outward appearance they could not be distinguished by their style from players on the links of St. Andrews. So that as far as the playing of the game itself is concerned, there does not seem to be as yet any definite divergence from the development as it goes on across the water.

Lastly, in considering the ethical side of golf in America there is this to be said, that in a country where the professional element is apt to creep into amateur athletics and spoil them for all future use, golf has been up to now, and presumably always will be, free from such a taint. Not that there is any intention to cast a slur upon professional athletics. Amateur and professional athletics should go on side by side in perfect amity; but when the line of demarcation is blurred, and semi-professionalism creeps into sport, results are apt to be disastrous. At first there seemed to be a want of understanding of the true spirit of the game in this country, leading to a club rivalry which ought never to exist at all; for wherever you get club rivalry an element of semi-professionalism is apt to enter sooner or later.

The executive committee of the United States Golf Association has done excellently well in refusing to deal officially in any way with team matches between rival clubs, and as long as such team matches are not officially recognised and



MR. J. A. TYNG, AT FINISH OF DRIVE.

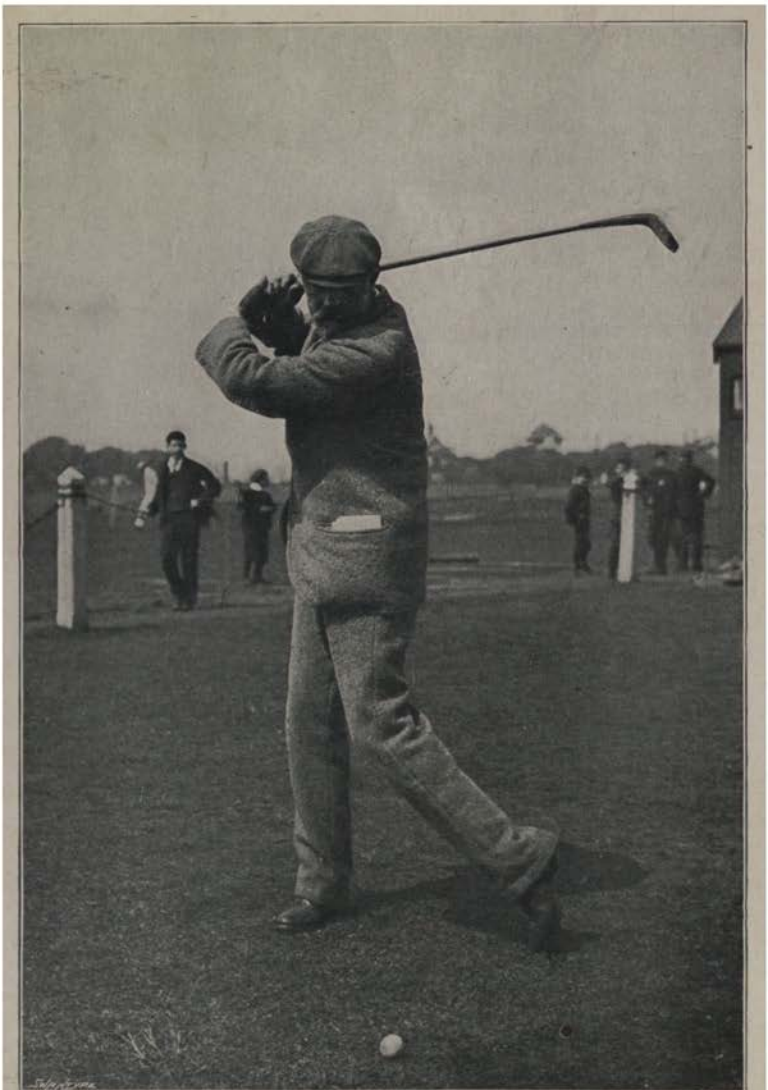
cannot give rise to leagues or challenge cups or other elements which lead to malice and hatred, they may be enjoyed as an excellent form of social amusement, although they have very little to do with the real game of golf.

The team match question thus being put aside, there is no reason why golf should not flourish into the far future as the cleanest of amateur sports in this country. The tournament craze and the love of pot-hunting is a necessary nuisance, and it must be confessed a rather enjoyable one, which is essential to the game in its early stages. But these early stages are already passed, and golf is already recognised as one of the best forms of athletics for men of all ages in the United States. It is no longer a fad; it has become an institution.

We are able to illustrate this interesting chapter of Mr. Whigham's on the rise of American golf by three photographs of himself taken in the act of playing one of those skilful short approach strokes by which chiefly he considers that he has attained his success. It is scarcely necessary to remind golfers that in 1897-8—that is to say, at the date of his writing the chapter which sets before us so clearly the differences between American golf and golf in Great Britain, the difficulties with which golf in the States had to contend, and the imperial manner in which that democratic people conquered their difficulties—at that date Mr. Whigham held the amateur championship of the States. In that same year broke out the war in Cuba, and thither Mr. Whigham went as special correspondent. He passed through some notable adventures; it was even rumoured at one time that he had been taken prisoner by the Spaniards, and some discussion forthwith arose as to the ransom that should be paid for an amateur champion golfer. It was proposed that he should be valued and exchanged at the rate of a general officer. In any case he returned in safety, and the photographs, which we are able to reproduce, were taken of him at Key West;

but though sound of limb he had contracted malarial fever, which we believe was telling on him not a little at the time of the last amateur championship in America, which was won by Mr. Findlay Douglas. We may say this without a shadow of reflection on the golfing merits of the present amateur champion, who, we believe, won entirely on his merits.

Mr. Whigham's chapter notices the very natural fact that the championship of the States has never yet been won by a native American, though he prophesies that the youth of America will soon assert itself when it has passed another year or two of apprenticeship at the old Scotch game. In the meantime, America has produced some sterling good native golfers, and probably none better than Mr. James Tyng, to whom Mr. Whigham refers, and whose style we are able to reproduce through the courtesy of the editor of the United States magazine named 'Golf,' which devotes itself exclusively to the game. Mr. Tyng, as Mr. Whigham says, is a golfer who picked up the game after his muscles were set or had been exercised in other athletic games, and his style has all the characteristics of a manner so acquired. In the illustration that shows Mr. Tyng at the moment of his address to the ball, the muscles of the forearm stand out with a prominence that shows the power that even a very short swing executed by such machinery cannot fail to have at command. And that Mr. Tyng's normal up-swing is, in fact, short, the second illustration fully shows. There is scarcely any turning of the body at the hips, scarcely any lift from the feet; all is done by the turn of the shoulders and the action of the arms. But in the third illustration, that shows the finish of the stroke, there is a deal more freedom, and our studies of our British golfing picture gallery convince us that the finish of the stroke—the follow-through—is really of more practical importance than the movements of the frame before the ball is hit. In the finish it is evident that Mr. Tyng has brought his body well forward on the left leg, the body has turned freely on the hips, the

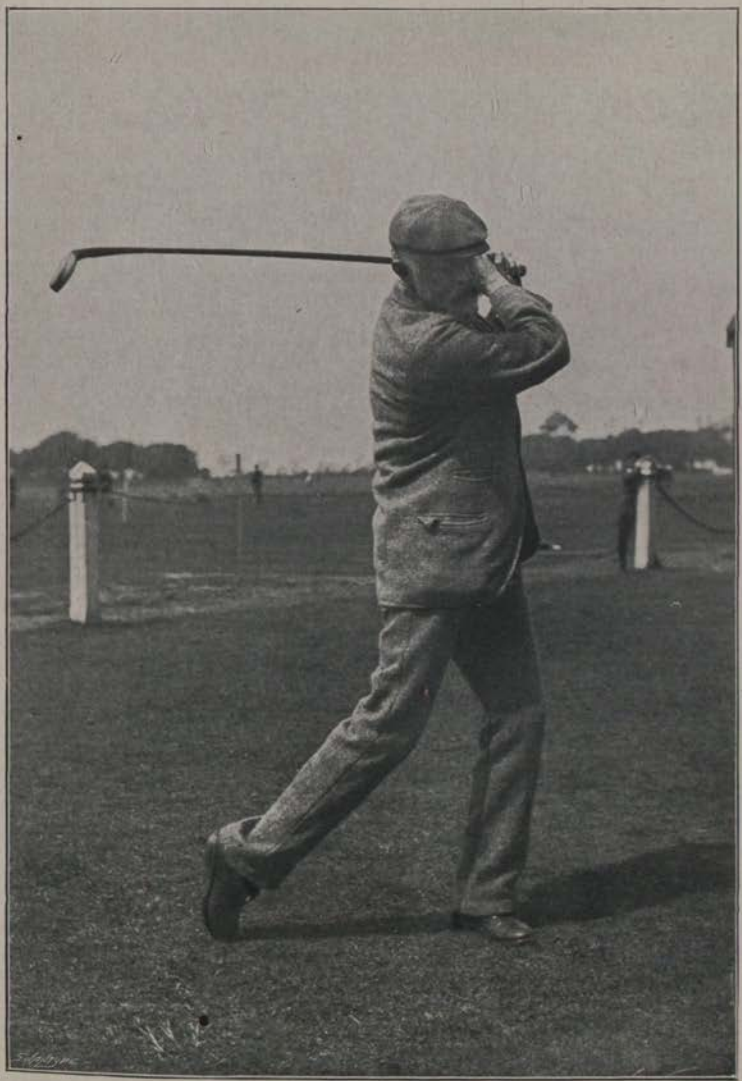


Mr. R. A. Hull, at Top of Swing.

right heel has come well away off the ground, to allow of freedom in all these movements, and the result is a really fine finish to the stroke.

Mr. Whigham suggests a comparison between those American players who have been brought up in their childhood on baseball, and so on, and have then taken to golf after the muscles have become set, with British players who have learned cricket as boys and taken to golf as an afterthought. He suggests a comparison especially with Mr. E. Buckland, but I prefer rather to give as a comparative study Mr. R. A. Hull—not in the least because he is the more typical of the 'converted cricketer,' but because it so happened that he came kindly to the camera which had not the opportunity of a snap-shot at Mr. Buckland. Mr. Hull, though he did not begin golf as a boy, has played the game for many a year now, and with such good share of success that he has won the second medal of the Royal and Ancient Club. The first medal has never fallen to his lot. There are points of likeness between his swing and that of Mr. Tyng, and there are notable points of difference. Mr. Hull, though his swing gives the effect to a spectator of being a short one, yet brings his club very nearly to the horizontal behind the head, which is further, as may be seen, than Mr. Tait or Mr. Graham, whose swings have all the appearance of being a good deal longer. But Mr. Hull, with turn of the hips and lift of the left heel, has helps to getting his club up which Mr. Tyng does not permit himself. After the stroke, Mr. Hull's follow-on is perhaps less free and complete than Mr. Tyng's—his arms not so fully thrown out—but he allows his body to come on after the ball by throwing the weight forward with a bent left knee; and he, too, has the useful turn of the hips again, and the right heel well up and away from the ground. It is always to be said, however, that the strong department of Mr. Hull's game is his short play and putting, rather than long driving from the tee or through the green.

With these few remarks in conclusion, we may allow Mr. Whigham's convincing picture of golf in the States to speak, as it speaks so eloquently, for itself. Mr. Whigham is of a notable golfing family, his father a fine player and one of the best partners in a foursome in the world, and he has two brothers at home who are able to give an excellent account of themselves even in such company as the amateur championship brings together. And they are young players still, with the best of their golf before them. On the ladies' side of the family, too, the golfing faculty has not failed. Brought up on the fine links of Prestwick, they necessarily learned to play every club in their set and imbibed the best golfing traditions. The United States have certainly been fortunate in the instructors that they have found to put them in the right royal way, and have proved themselves right royal pupils.



MR. R. A. HULL, AT FINISH OF DRIVE.

CHAPTER VII

LADIES

BY AMY BENNET PASCOE

THE lady golfer is a distinct genus, belonging to the order of Amazonæ, or athletic women. Interesting and instructive are the characteristics of the species, pity space prohibits a detailed account of its acquired and inherited habits; they are, however, very obvious to the *eruditi* in girls' games and sports. Lady golfers are found at every age, in all parts of the world. With curls down their backs, in abbreviated skirts, we meet them flying over the Shinnecock Hills, U.S.A., or silverhaired, bespectacled, bonneted, they waggle on the Wimbledon Common! Amid the desert near Bagdad they hole-out, win championships in New Zealand, and tea at the neat chalet pavilion on the top of the Mustapha slopes, Algiers. Their chief habitat is the United Kingdom; here they possess over one hundred and twenty clubs, of which nearly all have been instituted since the eighties. The evolution of the lady player may be studied by those who have no acquaintance with fossils or comparative anatomy. We trace her descent through Mary Queen of Scots, to the fishwives of Musselburgh. On the principle that a Norman ancestor is more usually quoted than a Victorian greengrocer grandmamma, the fact of Mary having played in the fields round Seton is better known than the instance of the fish ladies' competition in 1810 for a new Barcelona handkerchief, a new creel, and shawl. Although we cannot determine the exact sequence of women drivers and putters who preceded Queen Mary into the remotest hazards of history, we have

those records of their near relative—the male player—which guide us in the right direction; for it would not be possible that Scotch father, brother, and husband should play the game during many hundred years without their women ever joining in foursomes, or engaging among themselves in terrible single combat. Indeed, it may be proved that the discovery of golf was due to a woman. The pre-historic shepherd who hit a pebble with his crook into a neighbouring rabbit-hole, and thus accidentally originated the game, did so in a fit of ill-humour that his shepherdess was late for the *rendez-vous!*

The reason of woman's tardy introduction on Southron greens is that her presence there was somewhat severely interdicted in the Badminton book: firstly, lest men should find it hard to decide between flirting and playing the game; secondly, because of the volubility of female tongue and skirt; and thirdly, that should she volunteer to score there could be no manner of doubt in whose favour she would do so! However, as women grew more independent in their habits, and cultivated a love of fresh air and sport, lady golfers became naturalised in England, and notwithstanding a length of prize list and a shortness of course, factors not favourable to the production of first-class play, attention to style, keenness, and practice have developed within the last five years a game which elicits high praise in all parts where their championship has been held. Critical, able judges pronounce the drive of our best players to be both long and straight, their approach a matter of surprise, their putting more cool and accurate than men's.

Lady golfers may be classed under three heads, and treated of individually, viz.: the Golfer, scratch or handicap, the Pot-Hunter, the Player. *The Golfer* is often one of the younger and latest members of the club. A good match and a good score are her pleasures. She takes a genuine interest in links and clubs. From her the secretary hears no complaints of the difficulties on the course or the unfairness of her luck. She is a favourite with the handicap committee,

because a reduction of her odds is followed by no outcry; it dares curtail her allowance on any improvement of form shown, not waiting for a win; her ambition being a championship, not a button-hook! *The Pot-Hunter.*—These professional prize-catchers are fortunately not common, but most of us have had the opportunity of studying their habits. Their only enjoyment is in winning. They are no sportswomen. If they lose, we know that we shall all hear about their bad luck. The way that bad luck 'goes' for them is extraordinary. According to them, lies are infinitely worse in the particular spot where their ball rests than anywhere else on the links, even in the bunkers! The hazards seem to get up and follow them round the course! They have never been properly handicapped, yet most of them have played a long time and belong to many clubs. The fashion of undervaluing one's own powers, especially when accompanied by an over-appreciation of those of others, is so unusual in life that when we find it on the links we may confidently assert that such modesty is incompatible with morality. Pot-Hunters never seem to have any game of their own to think about, but they make up for this by taking a five-hundred horse-power interest in other people's. *The Player.*—Happy, light-hearted, irresponsible players! All serious golfers love you. Sparkling, gaseous, bright, an effervescence of youth and amusement. We recognise you by your fluttering pretty dress, merry laughter, irrelevant movements. You hurry out to the tee, and rush back again for balls! You putt and talk with the flag in the hole; and add up the score on the green while two cracks wait to play their approach. Such incidents as stymies, honours, penalty strokes, you take no note of. When after a round, where we have seen you and your caddies walking *off* instead of *on* the course, with a handsome allowance of twenty-four you win an enamelled brooch, we are pleased and congratulate you. We do not even expostulate when, on the point of striking off the tee, we are suddenly startled and miss the

globe by hearing eager voices discuss Mrs. B.'s last drive from an adjacent green. No! we glance at the bright young faces so unconscious of the enormity of that offence which has cost us our record round, and—forgive. The happy influence of youth and good spirits! desert not our lives for the lawn-tennis courts and hockey-fields. To preserve you we will cede the golfers' unwritten rule of silence. Talk on, therefore, unrebuked. For you are always talking as fast as you can. Casual observers might think you had nothing to do with the game, and had merely come out for two hours' hard conversational exercise! Nevertheless we like you. You are not always in trouble, neither do you worry about other people's handicaps.

The history of the evolution of ladies' links has yet to be written; it is too deep and exhaustive a subject for me to touch. An attempt to describe how ladies' courses passed from an indefinite incoherent homogeneity of lies and hazard to a definite coherent heterogeneity requires the ability of an historian and philosopher versed in all the intricacies of the Gaelic tongue; for surely it is in the ancient literature of Scotland, among her musty metrical romances, that we must look for the first allusion to the earliest forms of the green on which 'the braw Scotch lassie holed oot her ba''! While it is true that vague hints and nebulous references to some remote ancestor of the woman's course might possibly be found in the works of a forgotten chronicler, it was certainly not until the nineteenth century that their length and nature were seriously considered, or that opinions as to the advisability of extending them into something beyond putting-greens began to be mooted. I am afraid Mr. Horace Hutchinson is responsible for much of the structural weakness and deficiencies of the ladies' courses. That high authority deliberately questions our right to play on long links! and advocates the gift of a few holes, admitting of a drive or two of seventy or eighty yards; from which magnificent piece of generosity he eliminates everything likely to call forth a

game. However, Mr. Horace Hutchinson, whatever his printed theories are, has always in practice proved himself the friend of the lady golfer, and he has, moreover, recanted his heresy in a later edition of his work; still, we must attribute to his classical remarks that sad adherence to a type of links we would fain see become extinct. The memorable epoch of 1893, when the Women's Championship was instituted, altered the conception of ladies' driving and approaching current among the hitherto sceptical male, and did much to improve the courses. Carries were lengthened, greens guarded, and such a stroke as an approach putt entered the possibilities of women's golf.

Our physical and mental capacity to use a driver and lofter being no longer an hypothesis, but an historical fact, a gradual progress in the laying out of links was perceptible everywhere. It became no longer possible to break a record using a putter only, or to carry off the monthly medal with a game resembling croquet. The championship and the Ladies' Golf Union raised the standard of play, and the courses tried hard to adapt themselves to the higher golf. If the green accounts of the older clubs are consulted, and the expenditure on new tees, on lengthening, and on alterations read, we perceive the struggle for existence made by them; and certainly nine holes of reasonable length are better than eighteen where your drive strikes the flag or your second is a wrist shot. The only Union clubs which have an eighteen-hole green of their own are the Royal Portrush and the West Lancashire. There are clubs which play over men's courses, using separate and short tees. These I would term transition links, for the nine-hole course as a type is doomed; if it survives at all, it will be where the extra holes are impossible. The good players among us want eighteen holes, and the only arguments I have heard against having them are (1) that nine are enough for ordinary golfing womanhood, (2) that the clubs cannot afford the up-keep of longer links. I would suggest that ladies will play two rounds of eighteen with

the same ease as they play four rounds of nine, their [illegible] allowance, and that to obtain more funds the annua[illegible] scription could be doubled. The majority of golfers [illegible] to two clubs, and the longer and better course would [illegible] the preference.

The chief faults of our present short links are:

1. The short carries.
2. The absence of second shots, or play with brassy and cleek through the green.
3. The rudimentary nature of the hazards.
4. Insufficiency of space for a well-hit stroke.
5. The smallness of the putting greens.

Give a girl something to carry, and she will quickly learn to swipe. Our long drivers have learnt their golf on men's links. The second shot marks the virtuoso. It is the test of judgment and of the knowledge of distances; yet in this most necessary part of the game many of us fail, our short links affording no practice for brassy and cleek. There is nothing to be said against the Littlestone sand bunker, and the beds of rushes at Westward Ho! are excellent. But what of made bunkers that any ball with the faintest idea of steeplechasing jumps gaily, and hazards that it may (always does, in my own experience) run into, but which yet may not be played from? If the hole is planned for a wooden club from the tee, then it is a great pity that scratch players with a wind behind them are frequently obliged to use an iron or chance a burial in the bunker placed to punish a weak second shot. There is no reward for good strokes on short links. A grandly hit ball runs into obtruding badly situated hazards. We want more space everywhere. It is the same near the hole. No one who has played elsewhere ever dreams of pitching a ball on a typical ladies' green; it would never stay there. Some untutored persevering home members try it year after year, and it is sad to think of so much wasted effort! If Fate and a club match bring you to such a one, never attempt anything of a lofting nature: the

element of luck attending its approach is far more terrifying than any hazard which surrounds it. Aim to pitch the ball near the edge of the green, and if you are Fortune's favourite it may run up and stay there; if not, we know the alternative. The term 'green' should cover at least twenty yards of grass, and a flag encircled with a growth of weed, or premature hay, is not calculated to improve the putting or the temper!

The very best links owned by women is that of West Lancashire. It is pre-eminent for length, and has none of the faults catalogued above. It is easily accessible, being only two minutes' walk from Hall Road, one of the stations on the Lancashire and Yorkshire line from Liverpool to Southport. Situated near the sea, there are large natural sand bunkers, in every size and form. Many of the holes are about five hundred yards, with capital carries, and room for the ball to run after it alights. The course is of unusual interest for a ladies' green, and has been well laid out. Strength and skill are rewarded, not penalised; the players do not cross and recross each other's path; the round allows of variety, and does not contain a dull hole, many being of an exceptionally sporting nature: the grasses are natural and the air bracing. Great improvements have been made recently; there is now a handsome club-house, with every convenience for the large number of members. From the establishment of this northern golfing centre in 1891 up to the present moment of writing it owes much to the energy and influence of Mrs. Alsop, and it is almost safe to assume that if there had been no Mrs. Alsop at Blundell Sands, West Lancashire would not be the club it is now. The amount of time and love she has spent on it is only known to herself. Such unselfish devotion and untiring interest in all which concerns her sport deserves a very wide recognition among us, and it is impossible to mention any one whose name I respect in this connection as highly as hers. Could she have played regularly for her club, she would have proved

herself the backbone of the team; as it is, she is its chief supporter in other ways. Invariably bright and courteous, she has always an encouraging word for the younger promising player.

Within a three and a half mile radius of London are some of the most energetic southern clubs, the merits of whose members compensate for the malignancies of their course. Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays you can play on Wimbledon Common with Miss Lena Thomson, a silver medallist and the pleasantest of partners, or if desirous of defeat—which, after all, is the best practice—challenge Miss Issette Pearson, who, having practically planned the links and played round them three days a week since 1890, knows, not each blade of grass—that, perhaps, would not require any effort of memory—but every stone, rut, and piece of rubble. They are a curious nine holes; the varying and changing hazards make it difficult to keep both a good score and a good conscience. This club, under the name of the London Scottish Ladies', was founded in 1872 and reconstructed, under the name of Wimbledon Ladies', eighteen years later. In its early babyhood Mr. Franklin Adams kindly took care of it; afterwards his brother, Mr. Arthur Adams, and Mr. William Laidlaw Purves nursed it until it was able to walk alone. It is not particularly blessed in its surroundings, though healthily perched on the hill: the restrictions of common conservators preventing any enlargement and prominent improvement. The selection and management of the club's different committees are entirely in the treasurer's and secretary's hands. Wimbledon plays one of the strongest teams in England, though the driving of the ordinary member is often painfully cramped, owing to the tricky and circumscribed nature of the course.

Then there is Princes'—with a station at its gates—a new very pleasurable golfing ground; for eighteen holes and an abundance of turf are great advantages. There is space at Princes', extensive views, open air, and an odour of the

country. Given another year or two, it may be the best of our inland links. The turf is good, there are enough natural hazards, without open unplayable ditches as 'extras.' A little clearing, draining, and remodelling is all that is needed. The club house and management could not be bettered. Princes' is not localised. It has started the first Inter-County Competition by offering a challenge cup to be played for annually at Mitcham by representatives of all counties in Great Britain and Ireland, one year's residential qualification being indispensable. Any number of players may be entered for each county, and the cup is held for one year by the county returning the best four medal rounds for thirty-six holes.

If we leave town and move along the coast—south, east, and west—there are on all sides possessions of sand and bent, with golfers of quality to welcome us. Westward Ho! offers fine grass, beds of rushes, and a burn. How far removed from noise and red brick are the days spent on its velvety greenness! Days which seem longer here than anywhere else, so unhurried are life and time in that tranquil spot. Should the custom of competition still cling to us, then Littlestone, Eastbourne, and a hundred more present medals and silver spoils. The game has its two sides. The stir and excitement of emulation, with the talk and light chatter of the club-room, the friendly lunch and sociable gossipy tea. There is Ranelagh, bright in club colours and scarlet coats, crowded by competitors, when prizes are awarded for a carefully compiled score. Then there is the game played on the few solitudes left in England—away, miles far, from screaming railway engines, the clatter of cab, the world of fashion—on some point of the coast where we and our caddies are the only visible sentient things. The wind whispers round us, the warmth of the air lies on our cheeks; at all sides the width of view is silent, the incessant call of the sea stilled, for the tide is out. It lies a blue coruscating patch under a larger, bluer patch of the heaven. Amid such surroundings we get a rare sense of freedom and life, the world is at peace

here; the happiness of bird and insect in the sunlight and wonderful nature is ours also. Be our drive ever so long here, it brings us to no prize; hole we out ever so skilfully, there is no applause, but the pleasure lies in the doing and the beauty of the green.

Women play very many inter-club matches, and the captains belonging to the respective teams are kept perpetually busy with arrangements for attack or defence. These meetings can be very pleasant; they give good games, and improve the play of the club—nerve and judgment being largely matters of habit. They also somewhat mitigate that individualism in the game which is the chief drawback to golf as a sport. It is considered an honour to be one of the regular team, and most women think nothing of a journey or bad weather when an important club match is in prospect. If, however, the members are new to the game, and their club is of recent growth, the position of captain is no sinecure. The usual plan is to play the teams according to their respective club handicap; but all girls have not had a previous training in games, such as cricket and hockey, which makes them responsive to orders, conversant with the spirit of sport, and comprehensive of *esprit de corps*. In such a case a captain will want tact and even temper to keep her players in their places. A declines to play B, because that proposed opponent has a trick of saying 'like as you lie' when *on* the green, notwithstanding the discrepancy of stroke *through it*. C is too nervous to pair with D, the long driver. E and F cut each other socially, and won't speak even to say 'one off two.' G refuses to take on H, as the latter brings a relation to caddy. S's wire arrives to announce she was at a dance last night and now in bed. K wont play after G and L have suddenly become engaged! As for the foursomes which are usually started after lunch, no generalship will avail here. The best plan is to let the team choose their own partners; they would never do it, of course, but that it is impossible to play a foursome without one.

Inter-club matches might be made the most enjoyable side to the game, only second in interest to the championship itself. But before this comes to pass there must be a great change in the way in which they are played at present. Most of the good golfers belong to several clubs, often situated within the same or adjacent counties; the captains, anxious to put a strong team in the field, naturally make every early effort to secure their scratch members, and often women play for and against the same club in one season—an anomaly in sport! This custom weakens the individual and general local interest, and prevents any match being a test of the club's strength and status. I would suggest that members select one of their greens, and represent it, and it only. The objection current is that players by thus confining themselves to one have so much less golf. But once put these matches on a different basis, and they might be arranged on the lines of public-school and university cricket, and regular annual fixtures instituted. These encounters would be closely contested, and afford the greatest incentive to 'play up,' and facility for meeting first-class and new opponents. They would produce an improvement in skill, and form a specially interesting series of contests. Success in golf depends on the pleasure and interest taken in the game, and I believe there is some danger of destroying this enjoyment through the multiplication of slack friendly matches and prize competitions. It is not the quantity of play which injures the player, but its quality. Look at the amount of 'coaching' and practice matches the schools get in their sports. Instead of producing 'staleness,' these exercises improve form and the general conduct of the game. The system of doing the best for their 'side' or 'house' induces those habits of carefulness and keenness which are the foundations of excellency. Where the efforts of all unite coincidentally to achieve victory, an individual slackness is quickly marked and condemned. Golf must always lack the sympathetic co-operation with other players which is the charm of nearly all

field sports. From tee to hole, it is each for herself, and the bunker take the hindermost. Yet if inter-club and county matches were properly organised, the individualism of this pastime would be lessened. The desire to 'pull it off' for our club or corps, which honours us in its selection, is a more sporting spirit than the somewhat professional compiling of strokes to win for ourselves a biscuit-tin!

When one woman says of another that she would make a good captain, it is a high compliment, for captains are born, not made, and the qualities which fit for that post are the most valuable in other lines of life. Different clubs have different ways of electing their officials, but the position of captain is ever an honourable one, and should never be given to any who would fail to represent the club in a sporting and womanlike way. As she is the representative head of all the members, they as a body are often judged by her conduct, and certainly a captain should and can give the tone to the club. There are qualities indispensable to good captaincy—viz. tact, a thorough knowledge of the game, and an even temper. If, in addition to this, the captain is cheery, bright, enthusiastic, so much the better; but she must understand the rules and etiquette of her sport, and possess the useful and winning gift of good humour. Apathetic, excitable, greedy captains are bad. For the apathetic have no control nor influence, the excitable lose the confidence of all, and the greedy disgust the sporting contingent. A captain's work varies according to the work of the secretary and other officers, but her most important duty lies in the arrangement of the matches. It is for her to welcome the visiting team, bid them farewell, and see that everything is done for their comfort while they are on her green. To do this in a quiet and satisfactory manner, she should be at the club some time before the arrival of the visitors; thus she can personally assure herself that a sufficient number of good caddies are in attendance, refreshments prepared, the dressing-rooms in order, and yet have leisure to attend to any other

small fortuitous matter. Friendly hospitality is delightful, and makes for good will and enjoyment on both sides. There is every reason, I think, for the home captain to tell her guests of special local rules and peculiarities of the course. Her object and wish is for her team to win, but a victory won by the superior knowledge of the ground is not good golf, though it is often mistaken for it. Personally, I have no satisfaction in winning a hole from an opponent who, not having played the round before, takes a wrong club and lands in an unseen hazard. Blind bunkers and blind holes should be pointed out, and their distance if possible indicated. You want to win by a better stroke than your rival, not through her bad play or ill-luck. To forego an unfair advantage has ever been the stamp of a sportsman. To-day, when all classes are on the green, it is for those who feel that the unwritten law of honour is more binding than the most stringent rule to speak out and give the lead. If the captain shows this spirit, the members will learn to play a generous and sporting game. It does not follow that because the captain is thus solicitous for the strangers, the home team suffer. They are her peculiar care, and it is a good plan for her to start last, so that she may see all safely off the tee. She will not forget a word of encouragement to her nervous player, nor a warning to the careless—that the wind is due east, or the greens extra keen. Trifles such as these may make a difference of a hole, and one hole wins the match! An unselfish capable captain can in a couple of seasons turn a strong team out of comparatively raw material. As inter-club matches acquire the importance they deserve, the recognition that good captaincy is of important interest to a club will be more widely felt. A captain must have confidence in herself; though she may listen to volunteered advice, she must not act on it without due consideration. There is only one captain in a club, and the sooner members understand this the better. Let her stick to her arrangements. If these have been carefully

made, they are most probably better than the accidental advice offered her. When with a team on strange greens, she should be particular that her members pay attention to the laws and etiquette of golf. That rules make a game is sometimes forgotten by women. It often happens that at open meetings a captain is called on for a short speech; this is not difficult to achieve, and it is a common custom to return thanks for entertainment received. On her own links she should always be on the look out to discover young promising players, her eyes and ears open to all that goes on around her. When such a captain is found, the best thing is—keep her!

With women the secretaryship is generally honorary, and though it entails an expenditure of much time and trouble, there is always found some one to run through the correspondence, balance accounts, and post forthcoming events. I am not sure, however, that, provided funds permit, a paid secretary is not better. The work is often heavy, and club management must have incessant attention to be perfect. Members feel a delicacy in complaining of bad management and retarded notice to a lady who kindly devotes so much of her spare time for their benefit. But however simple and small a club is, its business and comfort should be irreproachable. Members have a right to all the conveniences their subscription can cover. Officers are there to carry out their wishes and regulations. The amateur secretary often resents complaint as personally reflecting on her management; the professional is paid to please, does so or goes! All officers and committees, if they accept the responsibilities of office, have no excuse for shortness of time or temper; their *raison d'être* is to discover defects and invent improvements; but a usual thing is to go on in a slovenly satisfaction with the existing state of affairs. The monopoly of all committee work by the older, and often worse, golfers is a frequent reason of this. Older women are jealous, especially of authority. Girls are over-eager, particularly if enthusiasts,

but it is foolish to alienate the younger good golfer. Fresh blood is always a capital thing; the promising new member should be given some *rôle*, made to feel she is an integral part of her club. On the cricket field, at boys' schools, these are they who are 'spotted' and trained to bring glory home. On the short links they are 'sat on' until 'squashed' or they achieve success. Clubs will welcome a player with a reputation, but few will help her make one.

It would not be out of place to recommend to committees the apostolic precept, 'Be courteous,' but it would probably be useless.

The best captain and officer I ever knew was Miss A. Tyrwhitt-Drake, a good all-round player and a thorough sportswoman. Ill-health now unfortunately prevents her presence on the links of the many clubs to which she still belongs. She could get a team together where every one else would fail, and although she was never anything but kindness and gentleness to all—I have never seen her ruffled under any circumstances—I do not fancy there is one who would have cared to dispute her command. During one season she was captain at three different clubs—a unique position! How she managed her multitudinous duties it is hard to imagine; that they were done, and done well, is certain, for she never disappointed any one. Her jokes and stories kept every one cheerful round the luncheon or tea table, and when she gave a prize, which she had a bad trick of doing, all were supremely anxious to win it. She was specially good to the younger members. Her quick eye and sound knowledge of golf made her a capital judge of a player.

The Ladies' Golf Union originated from a wish expressed by some members of the Wimbledon Ladies' Golf Club. Mr. Laidlaw Purves, that fairy god-parent of the game in the south, took up the subject warmly, and by his help its first meeting was held on April 19, 1893. The Union has been of use by combining the associated clubs in a greater conformity of rule, and by introducing more consistency in the

handicap system. It started with eleven clubs, and now numbers twenty-seven. The championship is played under its auspices, and as the members of Union clubs, when they compete for that honour, pay only an entrance fee of five shillings, and others one guinea, this is an inducement for clubs with a strong playing membership to associate with the Union. Each enrolled club the membership of which does not reach 100 is entitled to be represented on the council by one delegate. Those counting between 100 and 200 players have two representatives, and others over 200 three, but no club can have more than this number on the council, except at the annual meeting, as provided in Rule 6. The officers of the Union are: the President, Vice-Presidents, Honorary Secretary, and Honorary Treasurer; and the principal by-laws are: '1. In inter-club matches the minimum number of each team shall be eight for clubs of over fifty members, and six for clubs of fifty and under; 2. In inter-club matches each match won shall count two, in addition to the number of holes up.' The society publishes a small annual, containing its rules, a synopsis of the principal women's golfing events during the past season, and a list of the names and addresses of its members. In 1897 the Union decided to give a silver medal to each associated club, to be won by the player returning the lowest aggregate of four scores, under the Union handicap, in the medal round competition of the year. It also presents a handsome gold medal to be played for over a neutral course by the winners of the silver medals in each year. Any member of a Union club who desires to have a handicap for this competition must have sent in two medal scores, neither of which shall exceed the par of the green, as fixed by the Union, by more than twenty-five strokes. A member having a handicap in one club shall receive the same handicap at all the clubs to which she may belong, such handicap to be the lowest she shall receive. At any one club the par of the green is fixed by the handicap sub-committee, and the handicaps are calculated by doubling

the best gross score returned, adding the next best, and, having found the average of the three, subtracting the par of the green from it, and taking the remainder as the handicap.

At present, that a player can be scratch at one club, owe three at another, and receive four at a third, is a mysterious absurdity. Such inconsistency shouts for reform. If this scheme eventually leads to a conformity in the handicap system, it will have accomplished much. Miss Issette Pearson, the Union's indefatigable secretary and its moving spirit in legislative measures, is confident that it will. Already it can be a help to those whose sad lot in life it is to dole out strokes to the hungry competitors of large open meetings. The Ranelagh competitions often number 100 entries. On these green meadows you may drive fearfully, your class being minus three, or dig happily in bunkers with a handicap of twenty and odd, for your sins! It is all a matter of your club handicap. The injustices of life are nothing compared with those on the links; yet, strangely enough, Hyde Park has no golf socialist, demanding an equality of strokes.

It seems hopeless to attempt a list of the annual competitions open to a lady golfer. An editor, interested in physical aberrations, once asked me to compile a catalogue of such competitions. I began and worked hard every morning, only stopping for luncheon; but as he required the MS. within the year, and I found it would be my life-work, it has never been published. I will mention one or two of the events. Club matches, inter-club matches, private matches. Mixed foursomes, ladies' foursomes, married *versus* single foursomes, private foursomes, club foursomes. American tournaments, monthly medal rounds, medal rounds under handicap, medal rounds for the best scratch score, annual monthly medal winner's competition, questions and answers on the rules competition, driving, approaching, and putting competitions, consolation competitions, open competitions, bogey competitions, the championship! Why are there, then, no prizes for

players who have never yet competed—a maiden plate? Is it because the existent lady golfer would find difficulty in qualifying? It is a fact that a lady has been known to enter for a large open meeting who had only played twice previously. But the demoralising egotism of the game is proverbial! A club may crowd its tees, block the greens, strew the bunkers with balls, and call this comedy of golf a medal day—*c'est son affaire!* but to popularise open meetings, where handicaps of twenty-eight are given and more grumbled for, is to put a premium on bad play, and becomes the concern of all those who have the true interest of the sport at heart. Where prizes and strokes are many there will the golfers be gathered together. There are few men's clubs whose members receive an allowance of over eighteen. Ladies get twenty-four, thirty, forty. To what depths of debilitated driving and abyss of foozles can prize winning descend when we find recipients of these numbers! Golf under such circumstances is an ingenious game, not a sport. 'How can any one give any one else thirty, with the par of the green at sixty-eight?' enquires Alice in Wonderland. 'Handicaps defy the arbitrary rules of scientific formulæ,' pants the committee. 'And disregard the petty limits of common sense,' responds Alice with a fine scorn. Then she goes away and writes a golfer's catechism—that is to say, an instruction to be learned of every player before she be elected by her club.

To win a championship requires a judgment so keen and cool, a game so good and steady, and withal so happily circumstanced, that unless a player is *facile princeps* the golfer of the year it is impossible to spot the winner, or even name those who are sure of a place. The Ladies' Golf Union gives a gold medal to the champion, a silver to the runner-up, and bronze ones to semi-finalists. The challenge cup, value 5*l.* 5*s.*, is held by the club from which the winner entered; she herself receiving a small replica. Up to the present time of writing, the event has been held four times in England, once in Scotland, and once in Ireland. It is

played on a shortened course of some long links. The Union is limited in its choice of a suitable locale, as of course it cannot invite itself, but must wait for invitation. The greatest kindness and consideration is always shown by the men's club to whom the green belongs. These gentlemen invariably give up the use of their club house for the week, and act themselves as referees and committee men. Their courtesy and patience are apparently inexhaustible. The week before the place is generally in a state of intense golf excitement. 'Best player! can't be beat,' whisper the backers, and the prophets prophesy foolish things. All along the links are scattered ladies—practising; they thus acquire a knowledge of the course which would put to shame the local professional. They have counted the rabbit holes, and know the green where the worm loves to feed! With ominous contraction of their lips they circle the driver round their club hat-band and carry the unresisting hazard; the next moment their glistening steel rolls the ball on the green, then with a contemptuous shove of the putter, they leave it dead! Yet, alas! they lack one thing: that gift is the unrevealed power of winning against an opponent who stands four up and two to go! When this discovery is made, we shall all want a new game. As the heats progress, and the wind rises, the player's temperature rises too; representatives of the press appear on the scene, the trophy is presented amid a crescendo of praise, and the four medallists return from the monotony of success to the stirring incidents of home life.

The primary idea of a championship is to discover the best players, and thus a fair field and no favour are indispensable. The luck of the draw and the luck of the green, both of which are accepted by sportswomen as inevitable, should not be further increased by the presence of ladies who enter for the 'fun of the thing'—which means that if they meet an unknown player they start, if a 'crack' they scratch. They would not survive their first round were it not for the weaknesses of others as unsporting as themselves.

I should fancy there are not more than two dozen golfers who have a reasonable prospect of carrying off the cup—yet we have a hundred entries. Every game here should be as close as the luck of the game and daily difference of form will allow. What we see is neck-to-neck finishes, and other matches with one player nowhere! The Ladies' Championship is always played in May, and we heartily wish that we had at command space wherein to give an account of all those who have distinguished themselves in that contest, but it is only possible to mention the three who have been cup-winners.

Lady Margaret Hamilton Russell was, I need hardly say, the best player of her day. She won the first three championships held at Lytham St. Anne's, Littlestone, and Portrush, the first two with a consummate ease which marked her as standing in a class of her own. Her style was perfect and marvellously graceful. She had a particularly long, beautiful swing. Deadly straight shots and a valuable courage were her 'points.'

The champion of 1896 was Miss A. B. Pascoe, who is not a bad golfer, though on account of her usual unsteadiness she is considered weaker than she is. Very good off the tee, and when once on the green, the poorness of her iron play places her ball in a bunker and her game within easy range of the arrows of criticism.

Miss E. C. Orr, having been brought up among golf surroundings, is an ideal typical player. Winner at Gullane 1897, in a field of 102 competitors, England and Scotland's best, we must regard her victory as one of the highest class. Her game has no weak point, but is critic-proof. It was Lady Margaret Hamilton Russell's swing, unequalled for beauty, which gave us a model of style, and it is the high standard of Miss Orr's play which will raise our own. England has gained by her victory, for the Scotch-bred game of the last lady champion is *sans peur et sans reproche.*

Ireland has a champion and Union of her own; the latter

enrols almost all the clubs in Ulster. Golf is spreading rapidly southward in the Emerald Isle, but is taken 'aisy' there. Little Wales contemplates a fixture for women this year. Holland and New Zealand have their annual event. America makes her women qualify by score play, the winning eight passing into the match rounds on the following days. Ladies, as a rule, are proficient in the use of the wooden clubs. The ordinary carry of a scratch player is about 130 yards, and the very long drivers exceed this by several yards. The fashion of a woman's life gives her a clearer eye and a greater delicacy of touch than a man possesses, therefore her putts are as straight and deadly as his, though less scientific. Good iron play among us is not so usual. Here it is that many of us fail. Our half-shots and short approaches lack loft, cut, and power. As a rule our set of clubs is too heavy—having been a great sinner in this respect myself, I would caution others.

Golfers should know something of the history and literature of their sport, of which each year sees a constant increase. As regards books which treat exclusively of the game on short links, we have none. Mrs. Mackern has written in the 'Badminton Magazine' and 'Encyclopædia of Sport,' and there are articles in the 'Golfer's Guide Series,' and a chapter in the 'Isthmian Golf Book' by Miss A. B. Pascoe. Reports of ladies' open meetings leave much to the imagination, the writer being usually some hours' railway journey from the scene of competition. Newspaper interviews and sketches of lady players are even more emotional and less moral. Travelling on the Inner Circle we catch sight of a poster with the heading 'Potent Putters, Golf Giants (it should be 'giantesses'), Drastic Drivers.' We hail Smith and invest in a sixpenny. The lady of this week, whose reproduced photograph we sincerely hope is a libel on her character, is unknown to us and fame. No matter, the modest violet is no less celebrated because she hides from publicity, and likewise this bashful flower of the links may have a sweet

swing. We open and read—but of her bicycle! her favourite jam! and bootmaker! The element of golf is eliminated altogether. A sickening horror seizes us. Once more we scan the journal. Too terrible! We have been caught out by a poster, and wasted sixpence. That potent putter, golf giantess, or drastic driver is an imaginative creation of an interview. Where is our sixpence? Far better it had been spent on a 'remade.' I have also ever been pleased to discover that the cruelest critics of my own game have been those to whom I would have no hesitation in offering three strokes a hole on my home links.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

If peradventure, golfer, it hath been thy lot to waste the long warm summer of thy youth on the green links, to have thine ears early attuned to the ring of the iron and the whirl of the ball on its rise through the air, when it starts like some white bird from the ground, soaring upwards over dread hazards of sand, water, and furze; if in the age of innocence and porridge thou didst absorb unconsciously the forty rules of match play, plus the fourteen for medal, and on the principle of transmitted impulses thou possessest a strong inherited tendency to a full swing, then pause not to read these poor few words. Ye blessed ones! who have never lived without a club in your hands, I wave you to pass, and leave me to address the motley multitude who block our nine-hole courses with weird muscularised motions practised by them amid circumstances of intense solemnity, under the name of 'my swing,' but which are commonly anathematised by other players freezing on the tee as 'Mrs. A.'s favourite foozle!'

These ghastly unspeakable contortions, reacting on the visual organs of a watchful handicap committee, give rise to such sensations of pity that handsome donations of twenty-four and thirty-six strokes are offered, and, I regret to think,

accepted. Shall I lift up the veil of compassion still further, and disclose to you that at a club in the South of England one member is in possession of a ninety-nine handicap? An inexhaustible credit draft, you cry in astonishment. Alas! ten minutes after these unfortunates leave the tee the account is overdrawn. A bad lie, whin, or bunker is their immediate bankruptcy, and the record of their liabilities floats sadly down the wind. Lady golfers, these things need not be. Certainly the first-class player is born, not made, like the musician and poet, not manufactured with theories and practice, but all with health, time, and perseverance may attain unto second place; and any one can learn to golf sufficiently well for it to be a pleasure to herself and no nuisance to others. 'I don't play well, I never make any improvement. I shall never be any better.' These buzzes of despair continually suffuse our club rooms. Time alters the colour of our members' hair, the fashion of their clothes, but unfortunately appears powerless to affect the paralysing monotony of their score, which on medal day rises to three figures. My friend, the reason for your failure is this: you possess the minimum power of execution and an absence of all theoretical knowledge. Hence, no stroke comes off, unless it is allied to the genus 'Fluke.' You depend entirely on your misdirected muscular force. With years you learn to arrive on the green, it is true, and have generated a theory of your own on the process of reaching it which will effectually prevent your ever attaining the paradise of scratch golfers. The majority of you have never had a lesson. Self-taught, you have probably not discovered that there are certain positions for body and club in which it is easiest to hit the ball. The athletic woman, being only a modern invention, has rarely an inherited instinct for games of ball, and her skill must be acquired by patient observation and practice. 'But I do practise,' cries Miss 36 Handicap. Pardon me, you do not. You can hardly dignify with that word a perpetual perpetration of the same mistakes. If you really

practise, you must improve. What you have to do is: first, realise how a certain stroke must be played; secondly, find out your fault; thirdly, overcome it. I am convinced that adult beginners and fossilised foozlers think too little of theory and its bearing on their practice. Theory cannot be hid. Once understand from object-lessons, or diagrams, the position that limbs and clubs should assume for certain shots, endeavouring to put theory into practice, and in time your shot will characterise itself as the result of that theory. Never mind, so long as the theory be a sound one, if its practice be less beautiful. Golfing on this system you are bound to improve. Never imitate blindly. The adopted style of another is only half your own. Besides, there are certain indispensable principles that you must understand in order to counteract successfully certain natural bad habits. Theoretical principles teach position, free swing, and proper grip—in a word, correct style. Force and firmness follow from practice.

To those who would start afresh, I say: Go to a good professional, one who is accustomed to coach ladies. His trained eye will immediately detect violent or subtle aberrations in swing or stance. Understand from him where you go wrong, then practise; but do not content yourself with verbal precepts. Read Hutchinson, Everard, and other golf guides. Be prepared for some degree of obscurity in your manuals. Fog them out for yourself. Do not take them to your professional instructor. The coach, secure in the certainty of a long-life practice, mocks joyously at theories. He has swung his club since caddyhood, and plays greatly by an intuitive process. Natural golfing genius defies the arbitrary rules of golf formulæ. 'You've a club and a ball, why don't you drive?' I once heard a much-tried young professional ask his pupil. Truly a Socratic poser this. The chief difference between professional and amateur teachers is that the former coach more as spectators of our manifold wrong-doings. The latter, having practical

experience of gross frailties, teach from an inwardness of knowledge that conveys comprehension and comfort. The professional is replete with traditional, and to you vague, phrases: 'Slow back,' 'Follow through,' 'Keep your eye on the ball.' 'I always keep my eye on the ball,' interrupts Miss Foozler. Indeed, Mademoiselle, but I believe only until the club comes within an inch of it. Then presto! off goes the eye, but the ball generally waits—in a bunker! A study of theory will suggest that you should keep looking at the spot where the ball was, after it has left—not moving off position.

I am certain that all long handicap players could reduce their allowances on ladies' links to eighteen, a legitimate number. A strict adherence to principles adopted by all good golfers would revolutionise their game. A prevalent error among ladies is that strength is a *sine quâ non*. Physical fitness is a great advantage in all sports, but in ball games the essentials for success are: that the ball be hit at the right time, and in the right way. None therefore are debarred from studying the philosophy of a drive—the mystery of a successful approach, the palpitating piquancy of a putt! Allow the opponents and partners you meet to trace some connection between your theory and your game. And when your handicap comes down, and the principles and practice of golf are yours, do not forget that will is the measure of many a long drive and the secret of all success.

[Since Miss Pascoe was kind enough to write the above able chapter the Ladies' Championship for 1898-9 has been played on the Great Yarmouth links, and won by Miss Lena Thomson.—H.G.H.]

CHAPTER VIII

METHODS OF PLAY

By H. G. Hutchinson

The game of golf is played, according to the phrasing of the rule, by two or more sides, each playing its own ball. That is well enough, as far as it goes, but it is not a very illuminating account; it would not teach a stranger to the game the exact manner of its execution. The most common way of playing is, of course, in a single match or in a foursome match, one playing against one, or two playing alternate strokes, against two others, likewise playing alternate strokes. But, besides these methods, there are the well-known three-ball games, in which each may play against each, or the best player may play his own ball against the 'best ball,' as it is ungrammatically called, of the other two—that is to say, the two who are in alliance count the score that is the lower, at each hole, against the score of the single player. If A and B are playing their 'best ball' against C, and A does the first hole in four, whereas B takes five, A and B are entitled to count the lower figure—the four—against C's score; and so on at each successive hole. In these days of congested greens there is a deal of feeling against these three-ball matches—quite needlessly. The rule amply provides against their creating extra congestion by particularly stating that they may be passed at any time, and it is to be specially recognised that the party playing behind a three-ball match that is really blocking the green is very remiss about its duty if it do not insist on its right of

passing. Otherwise this party gives the parties behind again no chance of passing the three-ball match, and the whole green is delayed. But as a matter of fact it is quite the exception to find golfers thoughtless enough to start on a three-ball game on a crowded green, unless they are justified in doing so by knowing that they are fairly quick players. Now and again, even in the very medal week at St. Andrews, a three-ball match or two will go forth; but the players are generally something like first class, and a three-ball match of that calibre moves a deal quicker than the normal rate of progress on the green at that season. They are in no one's way. No one would arrive home a minute sooner if one of the three dropped out, and generally the party behind is wise enough not to exercise the law according to its letter, but to allow the unoffending match to go its way unharassed. It is only if the three-ball match is obviously delaying the course of after events that it becomes a positive duty to insist on the privileges given to a two-ball match under the rules.

This apology for three-ball matches is inspired by the fact that their status is often a little misunderstood, and the participators regarded rather in the light of criminals, however little actual mischief and delay they cause. And to the taste of many golfers they are particularly agreeable, for they give a chance for the playing of two or more matches in the single round, and so add proportionately to the interest. It is curious how often very good scores have been made in three-ball matches, how often they have furnished the occasion for the making and breaking of record scores, probably for the very reason that they give an added incentive to constant effort, for if one player have fared greatly better, at a certain hole, than one of the others, it is likely enough that the third is still giving him something to play against. Also, by the rule, there are no stimies in these three-ball games, so that every opportunity is given for a good score.

The stimy question in match play still remains a vexed one in the general golfing mind, and on some greens it is

rather the exception than the rule for stimies to be played. By mutual consent they are often abolished, and none of the inconveniences—such as disputes as to the exact position of the removed ball—which the lovers of the stimy urge as likely to arise, and as a motive for its retention, seem to occur; but there is a particular mode of doing away with the stimy, first suggested by Captain Burn, as I believe, which seems preferable to any other, and this is to give the player whose stroke is intercepted the right to say to the opponent, 'I give you that in. Take the ball away.' That is to say, that if the intercepting ball is so close to the hole that the opponent thinks there is no reasonable chance of the putt being missed, he will 'give it in' as if the ball had been actually played and holed. If, on the other hand, he thinks there is a reasonable doubt of the ball being holed, he will naturally prefer to try to loft or circumvent the stimying ball, and so the delicate and difficult stroke will be retained. The suggested plan has these peculiar excellences: first, that it does away with all possibility of dispute about the replacement of the ball, since it is not to be replaced, and secondly that it retains just those stimies which give a good lofter a reasonable chance of holing his ball over the intercepting one. For it is just those balls that lie on the lip of the hole, and which would naturally be given as in by an opponent, that give the bad, because the practically impossible, stimy. When the ball is a little further from the hole there is a reasonable chance of pitching over it and running on into the hole; but the pitching right into the hole, which is practically what the stimy on the very lip of the hole demands, is such a *tour de force* that its execution is almost a fluke, and outside the sphere of practical golfing politics. Of course the ordinary rule of lifting when the balls lie within six inches of each other would be retained, even with this suggested mode of dealing with the stimy.

The principle of 'best ball' is capable of indefinite extension, according to the relative capacities of the players.

Mr. Tait not so very long ago was playing matches with his single ball against the best ball of Tom Morris, Mr. Everard, and Captain Burn—a very formidable alliance. Indeed five-ball matches, and even more, have been seen on the St. Andrews green and elsewhere, but the three-ball match includes as many players as can often take part in a match with comfort, and without occasioning too much delay by the necessity for the opponents waiting while one is playing.

Mr. Tait and Mr. Edward Blackwell lately played, and won, a singular match against Andrew Kirkaldy and Willie Auchterlonie, in which the 'best ball' of one side scored against the 'best ball' of the other; and this, though something of a golfing eccentricity, seems likely to come into a good deal of favour. Mr. Tait is specially partial to it. He and Mr. Graham, playing in this kind of partnership, have had match and match about with Mr. Ball and Mr. Hilton, and he and Mr. Mure Fergusson have twice defeated Mr. Arnold Blyth and Mr. Eric Hambro.

Score play has been aptly described as a means by which the play of many is brought into comparison in the course of a single round. It is never quite as satisfactory as match play by holes, partly because in playing for a score the golfer has the consciousness always impending on him that a single bad stroke may be the occasion of ruin to his score, whereas in match play its worst result could be only the loss of a single hole, and partly because it does away with the 'personal element'—with that hand-to-hand fight with a flesh and blood opponent that is the very essence of the game by holes. With a view of doing away with the first-named drawback, the device of playing against a 'bogey' score has been invented—a score previously drawn up, with figures given for each hole, against which figures the players contend, and he that comes in most holes up or least holes down to the bogey score is accredited the winner. It is a very excellent device, by general consent assumed to be of English origin, and though of this reputed southern origin, and

baptized with a name that sounds to the earnest Scottish player rather in the nature of light trifling with his solemn game, has found its way nevertheless into the centres of Scottish golf and been given a trial even on the St. Andrews green. But its southern origin is not wholly undisputed, for it is asserted, and strongly maintained, by some, that many years before its invention in the south, and its baptism by its doubtful name, the golfers of Elie had a way of playing against what they called the 'ground score' which was virtually identical with the 'bogey score' of to-day. There is no doubt in any case that the southern 'bogey' was an absolutely original invention, even if it be true that there is no new thing under the sun, and that the Elie folk had played against 'bogey' under another name years before; for Mr. Rotherham, the deviser of the plan, as we believe, at Coventry, had certainly never heard of this Elie 'ground score.' To him, therefore, as having brought the device into favour, belongs all the honour due to an original discoverer. 'Bogey' competitions are now so common in England that there are nearly as many held under these conditions as on the older scoring method.

It has never, however, come into use at any of the greater competitions. The open championship is decided by score—by the score of seventy-two holes. The Amateur Cup is competed for by tournament, the entries being supplemented by blanks until the total is raised to a power of two, and a blank being drawn against the name of each competitor as it comes out until the blanks are exhausted; so that all the byes come in the first round, and the tournament works out smoothly to the finish. Of course this assumes that there shall be no ties, and the means by which ties are avoided is not altogether satisfactory. After toiling through the heat of a whole round of eighteen holes it seems rather inadequate to settle a result which so long a struggle has left doubtful by the issue of a single other hole, played after the round has been halved. But there is no other very obvious way in

which the tournament could be made to work itself out to a smooth finish, for if halved matches had to be replayed, and decided by yet another full round, there is no saying when the business would come to an end. The only question that remains is whether the game is worth the candle, whether the end achieved is sufficiently important to justify the not quite satisfactory means, whether, in fact, it would not be almost better to allow halves to count as wins, allow both parties, where two finished equal, to go on into the next round, as is done in handicap tournaments, and to let the byes come where they please. The objection to this plan is not so important as it was when the device of bringing all the byes into the first round was first adopted, for at that time the final heat was decided by a single round, and it was thought very unfair that in the case of three being left in on the last day, one player should have a complete rest in the morning while the other two were engaged in what might be a very hard tussle. Obviously the man who had looked on in the morning would have some not quite fair advantage in the afternoon when he came to meet the other, whose nerves and muscles had been at a hard stretch all the morning through. But now that it is ruled that the decision of the final heat shall be a two-round business, and shall be reached on another day than that on which the semi-final is decided, this objection scarcely holds, and it is well worth reconsidering whether the unsatisfactory settlement of halved matches under the present system is not a bigger bother than the occurrence of byes all through the tournament could ever be. This, however, is a matter for the consideration of the higher authorities. One thing at least is very certain, that the decision of halved matches in handicap tournaments by the result of a single extra hole is obviously most unfair—so unfair that one would deem it scarcely worthy of comment, if it were not that one sometimes sees it practised. Supposing two to have halved whose golfing relations to each other are such that one gives the other a half—under the

system we are noticing they go out to decide their differences by playing on until one or other gains a hole. Should the mode of the green be for a half to be taken at the first hole, the giver of odds is at a grievous disadvantage, for though he can give only a half, he has to start giving a stroke on the first hole. On the contrary supposition (of nine strokes taken at the even holes), the unfairness is equally striking—the man who is a half worse than the opponent has to meet that opponent on equal terms. Possibly it may be urged in reply, why not let the men play two holes? This suggestion in their particular case might be fair enough; but supposing one to be handicapped to give the other one stroke in the round, it is obvious that these odds could not equitably be brought in without playing a whole round. Again, there is a device of giving a half at a single hole, the understanding being that if the giver of odds wins the hole the hole scores to him, but that if the hole be halved it scores to the receiver of the half. This, however, is only an ingenious eccentricity of handicapping; it is not a recognised golfing mode. And it, again, is subject to the same objection as the proposal to play two holes for decision; for though it works fairly equitably where the difference between players is rated at a half, it is scarcely applicable to any further fractional differences.

There is one drawback inherent in the method of play by tournament which no taking thought can modify—the misfortune that the best players are as likely as not to be drawn together, and to knock each other out in the early rounds, while a comparative duffer may find his way, by easy matches, into the final heats. This is a trouble that nothing can evade. The 'American tournament,' as it is called—in which each player plays all the rest and the winner of the tournament is he who wins the greatest number of matches—is, no doubt, the fairest of all, and does obviate the objection, inevitable under our plan, that the good men may have to do 'Kilkenny cat work' on each other. But, on the other hand,

the American plan is not well suited for a game like golf, in which a match of eighteen holes occupies half a day. It would make a tournament with such an entry list as our amateur championship immensely and impossibly long.

Our biggest competitions give examples of both the methods by which we bring a number of players into competition within reasonable limits of time, the open championship being a scoring business and the amateur a match tournament affair. There is a good deal of difference of opinion as to which method is the better and the fairer. The objections to the tournament plan we have considered, but it has the merit of bringing men together in that hand-to-hand struggle which is of the essence of the match at golf. The Americans for their amateur championship have adopted a method which is a combination of the methods of both our championships—a method for which there is a deal to be said. They have a competitive examination to start with, in the shape of a preliminary scoring competition, and the thirty-two lowest scorers then proceed to the final test by knock-out tournament. It is a method not peculiar to America, but has been tried in this country. Certainly it seems to have merits to commend it, and it may be that it is destined to make advances in golfing favour. The Americans have a clever way, too, of limiting the number of entries for one of their championships. Under the rule of a central golfing association they are able to organise their events better than we can do with our unrestricted right of local option. The association has required each club to send in a return of the length of each hole of its green, and of a 'scratch' score based thereon; the principle being to add two strokes to the number in which a hole can be comfortably reached by a good player, and to count the total as the 'scratch' or 'bogey' score for that hole. The total of the eighteen holes so reckoned gives the scratch score of the green. And until a player shall be able to show a score, duly witnessed by an opponent, that comes within six strokes of the scratch score at one or other of the greens

under the jurisdiction of the association, such player is not an admissible competitor for the championship. No doubt there is about this reckoning by sheer distance, irrespective of the nature of the ground thus measured—whether it be clear of hazard, like the Elysian Fields, or bristling with terrors like the neighbourhood of 'Hell' bunker—a roughness and a readiness that remind one rather of the famous bed of Procrustes; but at the same time there is a deal to be said in favour of the plan, and it would be a blessing if our own circumstances permitted us to apply some remedy of the kind to the evils of our own amateur championship, and some other, competitions. At present we are entitled to say to no man, however inefficient and however we may desire to tell him so: 'You are not good enough for this competition, you must go somewhere else;' though it is true that the authorities in charge of the open championship have done something to strengthen their hands in its direction by providing that if a player be too hopelessly behind the leader on the first day's score for this open competition he shall not proceed to 'cumber the ground' on the second day also. The main danger, however, which threatens the game at the present moment is not that of being allowed to go too free, but of being held with too tight a hand and overlaid with legislation. Especially would it be well that we should make a stand against the tyranny of the handicap committee being imported into match play. In matters under their own control the handicap committee should be tyrannical indeed, and there is no worse sign of a handicap than to find people who are satisfied with it—though any satisfaction that he may feel, the prudent and Machiavellian golfer will conceal with much subtlety. The handicap committee should be tyrannical in the sense of doing what they believe to be their duty, and meting out what they conceive to be justice, irrespective of the groans that they wring from their victims —for if they listen to such groans the advantage in the handicap will be given to him who groans the loudest, and

injustice will be done, for it is generally he who groans the loudest that deserves the hardest treatment. But it is when this tyranny is imported into the business of the match that we may begin, with every right, to resent it, for it is a tyranny that has no business there. It is not the committee that strive to impress their will upon the match players, but it is those who foolishly bring the methods of handicapping by score to apply to the playing of matches also that rouse resentment. Now and again, for purposes of 'bogey' play, or competition by tournament, we have to accept, with merely arithmetical adjustment, the rulings of the committee that have arranged the handicaps for the scoring competitions, and to adapt that arrangement to the match by holes. Thus, by a rough and ready reckoning, four strokes given as handicap for a scoring round is equivalent to three in a match by holes. This is conventionally accepted as a way of bringing a number of players into a competition on something like equal terms, but the handicap was originally made with a view to a scoring competition; some men play relatively better for score and others for holes; it needs something more than mere arithmetic to arrange the relation aright; and therefore much injustice is often done by insisting for purposes of private matches that players shall take three-fourths of the odds allowed them by the handicap committee. The old plan, before handicaps held so large a place in the golfing eye, was to arrange the match by a mutual friendly wrangle. The wrangle over the odds, to start with, was often not the least amusing part of the match. Now there is often none of this; the player who deems the handicap list to work in his favour invokes it as if it were an oracle, and the other has perforce to consent, because it looks at first glance as if nothing could be fairer than submitting the arrangement of the match to this impartial tribunal. But in point of fact it is unfair, because the original purpose of the handicap was to make things equal in scoring competitions and not in matches, and further because that original aim has been

diverted by reduction for wins and a variety of circumstances. To quote an extreme instance—there is a certain constant player on a certain green whose handicap is eighteen. He was given eighteen when he joined the club ten years ago. It was a fair handicap for him then, because he was then only a beginner. Now his fair handicap would be, perhaps, five. But he has never been in for a competition, and it is a maxim with the handicap committee of that club not to reduce a player's handicap until he has won something. The result is that, except with those that know him well, this gentleman never makes a match that is in the least fair. He invokes the oracle—'My handicap,' he says, 'is eighteen.' On that basis the match is played, and it is only perhaps once a year that this sapient gentleman is known to lose one. His is an exceptional and a flagitious case, but it is an instance in point, illustrating the dangers that we live under by reason of the tyranny of the official handicap. In the old days when we met a stranger the first question by way of preliminary to match making was: 'How do you play with So-and-so?' naming some mutually known opponent, and according to the answer the match was arranged. It was a pleasant and friendly way of settling matters, preferable and more just in its result than the present. We shall only arrive at that pleasant state of things again when we have relegated the official handicap to a properly humble place, or to the region of that bunker, east of the Elysian Fields, in the long-hole coming home at St. Andrews.

CHAPTER IX

PRACTICAL CLUB-MAKING

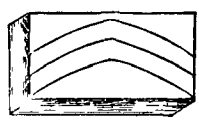
By J. H. Taylor

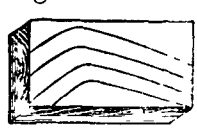
The popularity gained by golf within the last few years has made the demand for golf clubs and balls so great that hundreds of men are now continually engaged in their manufacture. The art of golf club and ball making has long since come to be considered a trade of sufficient importance to guarantee the apprenticing of lads to those already adepts in the business, so that the industry may be learned by them the more perfectly with a view to its becoming their means of livelihood. Machinery also has been invented to aid in the production of clubs, but though a great deal of the hard work has been saved in this manner, the finishing has yet to be done by skilled workmen, nor is it likely that it will ever be otherwise. In the manufacture of shafts even, although they are sometimes turned by machinery, yet in order to make anything like a satisfactory job each one has to be finished after the head has been fixed on. The great difficulty which golf club makers have always experienced has been the obtaining of good wood suitable for the purpose of head-making. Beech, which is more used than any other wood, grows in great abundance both in England and Scotland, but, notwithstanding the amount obtainable, it is exceedingly difficult to get it really good. A great deal depends on the manner in which the tree has been grown; if in some sheltered spot where plenty of nourishment has been afforded, it will generally be very soft, but if in some exposed quarter, where the growth has been

slow and difficult from the force of prevailing winds and the lack of soil, it will then be hard and durable. Under the latter circumstances no wood can be more suitable for making into golf club heads, for while it is hard enough to wear well, there is not that stony hardness about it which is sometimes found in holly, hornbeam, rockwood, &c. To inferior players this is a matter of no importance; but to others, if a yard or so can be added to the length of the drive by the extra spring in the wood, it is certainly worth thinking about. Apple is also often used, but being a more brittle wood than beech it is not easy to foretell what will happen to it. If it stands for the first few rounds it will probably last for years, but with rough usage it is very liable to break in the neck. This is not so plentiful a wood as beech, as the trees do not grow very large. The hardness of apple-wood does not depend so much on where it has been grown as is the case with beech; it is nearly always hard, but the sour apple trees are the hardest. There is a great deal of waste with this wood in cutting it up, as the trees are so small. It is also very treacherous to work, as there are often little flaws in it which cannot be seen at first, one of which may, however, appear in the neck of the club just when it is nearly finished, and of course labour in that case has been spent in vain. Thorn, which is also sometimes used, is very like apple in all respects. Hornbeam also, although it may turn out very well, being of a brittle nature often breaks very quickly in the neck. Nothing will so certainly break a club as hitting the ball on its neck. When a club has been broken, it is quite customary for the player to say: 'I did not strike the ground, hence it ought not to have broken,' whereas had he struck the ground a hundred times, instead of hitting the ball with the neck of his club two or three times, it probably would have remained whole. The neck is the weakest part of a club, and when it strikes the ball, there being nothing to resist the forward twist of the head, an unwonted strain is put upon the neck which is

almost sure to end in a smash. Because of the frequency with which clubs are broken in this manner bent woods have recently been introduced in which the grain runs straight up the neck of the club, which is thereby wonderfully strengthened. Hickory and beech are mostly used in this way. Although clubs made from this kind of wood are rather more expensive than the ordinary ones, yet they are by far the more economical in the end, as they last much longer. Shafts are mostly made of hickory, and for general purposes it is by far the best wood. It is also the cheapest. Greenheart makes very good shafts, especially for wooden clubs. Being stiff, it can be reduced until it is very fine, and it has a nice steely spring. It is not very good for rough work, as it is rather brittle and will break much more easily than hickory. It does not, however, become so easily bent as hickory, but has greater power of resistance. If pressed out of the straight, it will readily regain its former position as soon as the pressure is removed. Lancewood and lemon-wood, which are very much alike, also make very good shafts. They are neither quite so stiff nor so brittle as greenheart, but they possess much of its power for keeping straight. Of texa wood I can say but little, for, notwithstanding the great things claimed for it, I have not been able to discover wherein lies the advantage which it is supposed to possess over other woods. There are many woods which are occasionally used both for heads and shafts, besides those to which I have referred, but I have not mentioned them, as I thought it best to confine myself to those only which are most generally in use. All wood must be thoroughly seasoned before it is used. If heads were made of wood that was not seasoned, they would be more than likely to come rapidly to pieces if immediately played with, or would shrink very badly out of shape if kept, while shafts that were not seasoned would soon become as crooked as ram's horns. As shafts are mostly made from foreign wood, the best way is to obtain them already seasoned from timber merchants, but as a beech or apple tree may be

cast in any one's way I will explain briefly the treatment it should receive preparatory to being made into golf club heads. If the tree has to be felled, late in the autumn or mid-winter is the best time, as then the sap is not circulating. After it has been felled it should be sawn into plank $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches thick, care being taken to split the heart if possible, as a plank with the heart in the centre is next to useless. The next thing is to obtain from some club maker a block which has already been cut out for a head, and, taking this as a pattern, to draw on each plank the number of blocks it is calculated to produce. The simplest way is to cut the plank first into pieces the length of the block, which should be about eleven inches. In marking it off, the part of the block which is to form the neck of the club must have the grain running pretty straight up, and not across it. It was customary, a short time since, to cut blocks from the plank with the same amount of wood on each side of the angle, thus, so that either side might be used for the head or neck, as it was best suited for the purpose. The blocks were then sawn from the plank in this manner. This method was very useful, in so far as it always gave one or two chances of getting the grain right in the head, but the strength thus obtained in the neck was not sufficient to bear the strain put upon it, so another plan had to be adopted. Blocks are now usually sawn from the plank with one side of the angle already allotted for the neck and the other side for the head. The part which is to form the neck is therefore longer than that which is to form the head, thus. Instead, therefore, of cutting blocks from the plank in the manner shown above, they should be cut out thus. In this way the grain runs much straighter up the neck, which is consequently much stronger. The grain, however, must not be kept quite straight up the neck,





as that would unduly weaken the head. The objection to cutting out blocks in this manner is that if the grain of the head is not right it cannot be altered, but the objection is small compared with its advantages. What I mean is this, the grain of the head should run in one of three ways, either straight across from the face to the lead, longways from the toe to the heel, or curve from the face back towards the heel. With either of these three ways there is not much wrong, but if the grain runs from the face with an inclination towards the toe, the face will generally break up very soon after it is played with. The grain will usually be right if the block is sawn out so that the face of the club shall be formed of that part of the plank which was nearest the heart of the tree. This is also best for durability, as heart-wood, or duramen, is always the strongest. After the blocks are sawn out, they should be stacked in a well ventilated room to season. Plenty of space must be left between each block for the air to get through, but the sun must be kept from them or it will bake them to pieces. If the room is made hot by means of a fire they will also crack. The time they take to season depends on the degree of moisture in the wood when it was sawn up, but at the end of six months, if the room is well ventilated, they should be in pretty good working order. Of course blocks will season very much quicker than planks, and they are not so likely to split in drying as planks are. Wood is often seasoned artificially in a very short time, but it is not so good as when seasoned in the ordinary way. Before the blocks can be converted into golf club heads, a place must be found wherein to erect a bench, which must be strongly built, and should not be more than thirty-three inches high. Also the following implements must be obtained:

One vice, $3\frac{1}{2}$-inch jaw
One 14-inch bow saw
One 12-inch tenon saw
One 14-inch half-round wood rasp
One 14-inch half-round cabinet rasp
One 14-inch half-round cabinet file

One $\frac{3}{8}$-inch gouge	One scraper
One 1-inch chisel	One screw for leads
One medium hammer	One steel-bottom plane
One brace	One glue-pot
One lead ladle	One oil-stone
One $\frac{3}{16}$-inch twist drill	One oil-can
One small bit	One pair scales
One 12-inch screwdriver	Weights up to 8 ounces

A mould must be procured as a guide for the lie of the club and for the length, also one with which to mark out roughly the shape of the head. When all this is ready, and the vice has been firmly fixed to the bench, take one of the blocks and grip it in the vice, with the face upward and the part which is to form the neck pointing outward from the bench to your left. Mark off the lie of the club by placing the mould, which you have for that purpose, so that the angle and bottom of the mould comes flush with the angle and bottom of the block. Also mark on the block the length your head has to be. Then take it out of the vice and draw a line straight across the top, from the line which you drew on the face to denote its length. Place the mould, which gives you the shape of the head, with the point touching the line you have just drawn, and the front edge close to the face, and make a pencil mark round it. The head which we are about to produce is to be a bulger driver; and now that it is marked out, the first thing is to saw off the narrow strip from the front of the neck, that the bulge may be easily formed. Grip the block in the vice as before, and with the bow saw commence sawing where your line runs off to nothing, near the face, taking care to keep your hands a shade below, rather than above, the level. When that is sawn off, grip the block near the bend, on the left side of the vice, with the neck pointing straight up and down, and saw off the piece on the opposite side of the neck, working from the top down towards the head. Then put it into the vice on the right side, with the toe pointing upward and the neck toward

yourself, and saw to your line around the toe—in this case keeping your hands rather above the level. The lines drawn to show the lie were carried away when the piece was sawn from the front of the neck, so they must be drawn again in the same way as at first. Then put the head into the vice on the right side, with the face upward and the neck turned inward to the bench, and saw off the piece at the bottom of the neck with the tenon saw. Begin at the heel end of the line, and keep the saw leaning slightly towards the vice. The wood outside the line on the upper side of the neck must be left, in case it should be necessary to make the head more upright after it is finished. The head must now be put in the vice, with the face and back between the jaws and the neck upward to the right. The sharp edge on the upper side of the neck must be taken off with the bow saw, beginning at top and finishing near the face. You must stand rather to the right of the vice to do this. Then repeat the same operation on the opposite side of the neck, but instead of finishing as before—at the angle—continue right round the back and toe until the face is reached. To begin with, you must stand to the left of the vice, gradually moving to the right as the saw works round the head. The head is now ready for the rasp; but, before we proceed any further, I had better define the names by which I shall refer to its various parts:

Bottom: the part which rests on the ground.

Top: the part on which the maker's name is stamped.

Face: the part with which the ball is struck.

Back: the part where the lead is inserted.

Toe: the point of the head furthest from the neck.

Neck: that part as a whole which is attached to the shaft from the angle upwards.

Scare: the flat part on the under-side of the neck to which the shaft is glued.

Angle: the curve where the neck joins the head.

Heel: the part where the neck merges into the face.

It will be well now to procure, as a pattern, a head made

by some club maker, which should be carefully studied during all the subsequent proceedings. This got, put your head into the vice, with the bottom upward and the neck downward, on the left side; then take the wood rasp and level all irregularities on the bottom. Alter the position of the head so that the face is upward and the neck outward on the left. Straighten up the front of the neck, and make the face slightly round, holding the rasp a little on the slant from right to left, and working it to and from you. Take off the sharp edge at the bottom of the heel, by moving the hands from right to left, and round up the neck a little at the top of the face by the same kind of stroke, with the round side of the rasp. Change the head to the right side of the vice, with the back upward and the neck still outward from the bench. Make the back of the neck to correspond with the front, working from the left of the vice, and if necessary, in order to get the neck small enough, reverse the head to its former position and take a little more off the front. The widening of the head should take place simultaneously on each side of the neck. When this is done, and the back also bears some resemblance to the pattern, turn the toe upward and execute the curve round from the back; then put the head in the left side of the vice, and make a curve to join the first from the face. This completes the outline of the head, and brings us to the top. Grip it by the face and back, with the neck upward on the right, and work back over from the toe, also further rounding up the neck while the head is in this position. The cabinet rasp must now be taken, and the head fined up by going over it in exactly the same order as with the wood rasp. Having done this, the next thing is to cut out the place for the lead, but care must be taken now that the vice does not damage the head; so it will be wise to get a straight piece of wood, about the same size as the jaw of the vice, to put between it and the head, and also a piece for later use with one side hollowed out for the back of the head to fit into when cutting out the place for the horn. It will be well to

draw the outline of the lead first with pencil; then put the head into the vice with the back upward and the neck outward on the right, and with the tenon saw, keeping as near as possible first to the bottom line, then to the top, without destroying them, cut the inside piece of wood quite or nearly out in the shape of a V, standing close to the bench on the right side of the vice. Then take the gouge and make the end of the lead-groove nearest you the right shape, after which run the chisel along the upper edge, then reverse the head and shape the opposite end with the gouge, and run the chisel along the bottom edge. All this has been done while standing in one position, and the lead-groove being now the right shape, the edges must not be again interfered with. Make the two ends deeper with the gouge, and with a chisel and hammer clear out the centre, keeping the inside V-shape throughout. The depth which you will have to go down must be left to your own judgment, as the amount of lead required depends on the weight of the wood, and also on the weight the head has to be when finished. The usual weight of a head is from 7½ to 8 ounces. It is better, however, to make it rather too heavy than too light, as it can and must be made lighter when it is finished up. Having got it what you think to be the right depth, make three grooves on each side with the gouge, starting just below the edge, and continuing to the bottom with an inclination towards the heel This is to prevent the lead from working backward, which it always has a tendency to do when the club is played with. The next thing is to get the twist drill and tie a piece of whipping around it, about an inch from the point, so that you may know when you have bored far enough, and having put it in the brace, make one hole at each end and one in the middle. Then insert the screw and turn it until it becomes fairly tight, being careful not to overdo it for fear it should split the head. When the three holes have been made in this manner, and their frayed edges, which might prevent the lead from running freely into them, have been cleaned off

with the chisel, take a piece of clay about the size of a walnut, which should previously have been mixed with water until as pliable as putty, and, having made it a little longways, with one end square across, lay it in the palm of the left hand and flatten it out with the under edge of the right hand. Two pieces treated in this manner are to form a mould to keep the hot lead from running out at the ends of the cavity made to receive it, which it must otherwise do, as the centre has to be the highest part of it. First cover half of the cavity by placing the square end of one piece of clay across it near the middle, and pressing the edge tight against the wood all round it. Place the square end of the second piece of clay a quarter of an inch from the first piece, and cover the other half of the cavity in a similar manner to the first. The opening thus left between the two pieces of clay is for the lead to be poured into, but for fear it should flow over the sides of the opening little pieces of clay should be put to keep it back. Although nothing was said about it, I must presume that the ladle was put on the fire a few minutes ago, with some lead in it, and that the lead is now ready to pour into the head. Resting the bowl of the ladle on the jaws of the vice—which should be a little open—and having ascertained that the lead is not too hot, take the head by the neck with the left hand and pour the lead slowly into the opening, keeping it constantly running until the space is filled. If one part of the lead were allowed to become solid before the other part were poured in, the two lots would not knit together, and the upper piece would fly out when the club was being played with. If, however, when you begin to pour it in, the lead bubbles a good deal, which it will do if it is a little too hot, you may stop until the bubbling ceases somewhat, but do not let the lead become solid. When the cavity is full, remove the clay, put the head into the vice, and knock the edges of the lead round with the hammer to make it fit firmly against the wood, and also fill, by knocking in its edges, the little hole which will probably be in the centre where the

lead was poured in. Of course you must be careful not to knock it too hard, or the swelling of the lead will split the wood, especially at the toe. Cut off the superfluous lead with the chisel, which can be done all the better by wetting its edge, and the head will be ready for the horn. I advise that the horn should be obtained from a club-maker ready to put in, as it is difficult for one not accustomed to filing to work it straight, and unless this is done there is little hope of making a good fit. But if you are desirous of trying for yourself, cut off its ends with the tenon saw to the shape of the horn in your pattern head, then put it in the vice and make the bottom flat with the cabinet file. The back edge and end should be filed a little on the dovetail principle, so that it may not prise up when the ball is struck on it. Having done this, put your head into the vice with the bottom upward, the neck to the left and the back fitted into the hollow of the piece of wood which you have for that purpose. The top edge of the vice should be gripping about the middle of the face. Take the horn with the left hand, and place it on the head, keeping the thumb upon it to steady it, and the tips of the four fingers partly on its front edge and partly on the face of the club, to insure that a slight margin is projecting beyond the face, and mark it round with a pencil. Then saw along the back and end, keeping within the lines and not going very deep. The chisel must next be driven down all along the saw marks. A considerable amount of care is needed, especially at the end, as a piece of the heel may very soon be knocked out. Chip a little piece out at the heel end and let the head down in the vice until only about half the depth of the wood which has to be cut out is above its upper edge, then, with the chisel and hammer, cut out the part which is above, beginning at the heel and working through to the toe. The grain from the toe runs downward into the head towards the heel, so that to begin cutting at the toe would be very dangerous. Next raise the head again, so that a little more may be cut out, using the edge of the vice as a guide to keep

you straight. This must be repeated until you have gone down about the depth of your horn. Avoid cutting deeper at the back than at the front, and *vice versâ*. It will be necessary to undermine the back edge a little, because of the bevel on the horn; this can be done by running the chisel along it from toe to heel, but the top edge should not be interfered with. When the horn is fitting, put the head in the vice as before, but grip the edge of the horn, with its front jaw, instead of the face of the club. Screw the vice up fairly tight, and tap the horn with the hammer until it has a firm bearing; then take the twist drill and bore three holes, each one inclining to the centre of the head. Care must be taken not to twist the drill or it will snap at once, and whether driving it in or pulling it out, the brace must be turned in the same way, the right hand doing the turning and the left hand either pressing on it or pulling outward. Chalk rubbed on the vice and pieces of wood will prevent any tendency the head may have to slip. Three pegs must now be made, about one and a half inches long, of hickory, to fit the holes, rather smaller at the bottom, but gradually widening toward the top. Glue in the horn, dip the points of the pegs in glue, insert them in the holes, replace the head in vice and drive the pegs home. Saw off the ends to within three-sixteenths of an inch of the horn, and then drive them further in by squeezing the horn and top of the head between the jaws of the vice. Now finish up the head by going over it in the same order as previously with the cabinet rasp. If it be necessary to file off some of the lead, use the wood rasp. When you have got it the right shape, fine it up with the cabinet file and it is then ready for the scraper. In using the scraper, work as much as possible with the grain, and proceed in much the same order as with the files, beginning at the front of the neck, working round the back and toe, and finishing with the top. The lead should be cleaned off with one end of the scraper, and not with a cutting edge. It will separate much more freely when wet. This done, our next

business is with the shaft. Place it on the bench with its front against something to prevent its slipping, and taper it from top to bottom by planing the four sides equally. When it has been reduced to about half an inch square at the bottom end, round it up, keeping it as straight as possible. Before cutting the scare you must find out which way the grain runs, for the shaft will be made stronger or weaker by the manner in which it is glued to the head. Take a chisel and slice off one end, and you will see that the grain runs either straight across or up and down, just as you hold the shaft. If it were glued on with the grain running up and down, it would not be so strong by any means as if it ran through from side to side. Due regard having been paid to this, put the thin end of your shaft into the vice and cut the scare with the chisel, standing close to the shaft on the right of the vice. The scare should be about six inches long, and should be made very thin at the end. After you have cut it off roughly with the chisel, take the plane and make it smooth, keeping it if possible a little hollow in the middle, and then rough the surface with the cabinet rasp so that the glue may get a firm hold. Plane the scare of the head smooth, taking as little off it as possible at first, and tie it to the shaft to find out how it lies. If it is made too upright it cannot often be made flat again. To make it more upright the scare must be planed off at the end farthest from the angle. Having made it like the scare of the shaft, put some glue on each of them and tie them firmly together with an ordinary piece of string. Having ascertained that the head is not turned in, nor lying back, the club must be left until the glue is dry. When it is fit to work, take off the string and grip the neck of the club in the vice, with the head on the right side and the toe upward. Take the cabinet rasp, and make the scare flat on the top, tapering from the angle down to nothing where it joins the shaft. Then take it out of the vice, leaving the jaws partly open, hold the head with the left hand, put the shaft across the bench, and, resting the neck slantwise between the jaws on the right side,

file the neck and shaft at the joint into the customary shape. To guide you in this and what remains to be done, you had better keep a complete club by you. Now a piece of wood must be obtained about fourteen inches long, with a groove down the middle, which having been put in the vice, the shaft must be laid in the groove and planed up to the right feel. It should be set up a very little, and should be slightly oblong from the upper to the under side. When you have got enough spring in it, rub off any rough edges there may be with the fine file, and scrape it. Then give the head a good rubbing with No. 2 sandpaper, afterwards with No. 1, and varnish it with spirit varnish. Rub the shaft first with No. 3 sandpaper, then wet it to bring out the pithy substance from the grain. Allow it to dry, rub it with No. 2, and polish it by rubbing varnish and linseed oil upon it, with fine shavings. To assist in whipping the club, a hole should be made somewhere, in which to put the end of the shaft. Then start the whipping near the head, keeping the end underneath the string as you bind it round. Put the end of the shaft into the hole, and, standing with the club under the left arm, turn the head round with the left hand, letting the string slip through the right hand, but keeping it as tight as possible. When it is bound up to the top of the scare, cut the string, leaving about six inches for finishing it off. With this make two loops round the shaft, keeping the thumb underneath them, then remove the thumb, pass the end of the string underneath, and pull the loops tight, keeping them so by drawing up the end, which may now be cut quite close. Gently tap the top and bottom edges round with the hammer, rub the whole of the whipping with the hammer handle to make it as smooth as possible, and give it a coat of varnish. Having now come to the grip, mark off eleven inches from the end of the shaft, and rough the surface with the cabinet rasp. Then put on plenty of pitch, and bind a piece of listing round to within three inches of the bottom. The listing should be overlapped at the top to prevent it slipping off.

Pitch the first piece and bind another piece round in a similar manner, going to within two inches of the bottom. Pitch that, and carry another piece to within one inch. More pitch, and then put on the leather in just the same way as the listing, pulling it as tight as possible. Fasten it at the bottom with a small tin-tack, and cut the top and bottom edges round with the chisel. Then get a smooth piece of wood, and roll the grip between it and a clean part of the bench, afterwards taking off the rough edges with the cabinet file. Put the string on the top and bottom, making it secure in the same way that the whipping was secured. Tap it round with the hammer, and put varnish on the bottom piece. All that now remains to be done is to fine file the bottom and scrape it, clean up the face and rough it, make a chalk line over the top, on which to put the stamp if you have one, give the whipping and head two more coats of varnish, and the club is quite complete.

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I presume that this chapter, in which Taylor was very ably assisted, I do not quite know the shares of each, by his partner Cann, an old pupil of Charles Gibson at Westward Ho!—who was himself a disciple of Tom Dunn when the latter was at North Berwick, and so an inheritor of the traditions of a fine club-making guild—this chapter, I presume, will be specially interesting to the amateur club-maker. To him, so clear, so methodical, and so precise are its instructions that it can scarcely fail to be invaluable, and it seems not impossible that it may be the means of turning many an amateur who is at present no club-maker to thoughts of making his drivers for himself. The profession has more work on its hands than it can fairly manage, and should be rather grateful for anything that may take a little of it out of the shops. For my own part, I may say that I have never tried so much as to hammer in a nail that did not break off or go crooked, yet, for all that, I have read Taylor's, or Cann's, chapter with much interest. It is a revelation that there is so much to be

done in the making of a club—almost as difficult as playing golf itself—and it seems to make the value of the four and sixpence that one pays for a club go up very considerably. Before the chapter settles down to its rasp and saw work on the actual club there are points of some note. First, Taylor's verdict in favour of the bent necks is worthy of attention, his discussion of various woods is full of interest, and even the manner of growing the trees appears to be of an importance hitherto unsuspected by the plain man.

It is also pleasant to see oneself turned inside out, as it were, and to read his gentle criticism on the amateur who comes into the shop with a broken club, complaining that he 'did not hit the ground with it.' Better if he had, says Taylor, than hit the ball on the neck. Now there are many men who habitually hit the ball on the neck of the club, and we all do it sometimes, so it behoves us to examine our clubs carefully, to see whether they bear the tell-tale marks of much mishitting, before we come complaining, with a broken head, to the club-maker, to meet his politely deprecating smile.—H.G.H.

CHAPTER X

CLUBS AND BALLS

By H. G. Hutchinson

The game of golf has been almost revolutionised within comparatively recent years by the introduction of gutta-percha as the material for golf balls. It is not too much to say *the* material, for though a few others have been tried, and a few compounds are on the market, such as the Eclipse ball, a very large proportion of gutta-percha enters into the manufacture of all the compounds, and trial of all materials into which it does not so enter has in every case proved them to be wanting. The writer has been at the trouble to have a ball specially made of boxwood, of similar weight and grooving to a golf ball, by a cunning maker of those boxwood balls for players of the *jeu de mail*—the game anciently played in Pall Mall—in Southern France. It proved perfectly useless. A hundred yards was the very utmost limit of its flight off a club, and the result has been virtually the same in the case of every trial made with balls of celluloid, aluminium, or whatever various materials the ingenuity of the golfer has applied, by way of experiment, to the purpose.[1]

Gutta-percha still holds its own by virtue of some subtle elasticity which gives it a longer carry than any of its proposed substitutes. Some composition balls putt even better —none drive as well.

[1] Since the above lines were written there have appeared two balls of distinct and new materials, the one material being named Oxyline and the other Maponite.

Previously to the use of gutta-percha, as all golfers know, balls were made of leather, sewn together, and crammed full of feathers. It is to be assumed that they were good balls for flight, and indeed the tightly compressed feathers must have had a fine quality of 'resilience,' as we now say about our bicycle tyres. But the argument which backs the assumption of the excellent flight of the old 'feather' balls, as they were called, is the striking fact that none of the *laudatores temporis acti* who try to make out that skill in golf playing has not advanced, ever strive to support their case by contending that the present 'gutties' fly farther than the old 'feathers.' Were this the fact, assuredly they would use it for all it is worth, and their refraining from its use may dispose us to the assumption that the old balls flew even better. Perhaps, however, this is an assumption a little too large. Let us be content with inferring that they certainly flew no worse.

When first the gutta-percha ball was brought to the notice of the golfing public—a very select little public in those days—it suffered the fate of all new inventions. Golfers, then as now, were conservative. They had no good word to say for the new ball. Naturally enough, those whose livelihood depended on the making and selling of the 'feather' balls not only said no good word for the invention that was to take the bread out of their mouths—they even said many ill words about it. And at first the 'gutties' seemed to justify ill words. They started well off the club, but after flying a little way they 'ducked' unaccountably. Still they gained some admirers, by virtue of their transcendent merit of comparative cheapness. Four shillings was about the price of a 'feather' ball, and a knock on the head with an iron cleft a hole that let the feathers, and the virtue, out of it. But the iron had no such fatal effects on the gutta-percha ball that cost only a shilling. Not only so, but observers were surprised to see that after a few such severe blows on the head the ball seemed to fly better than ever—not

to 'duck,' as in the days of its perfect globular smoothness. This fact led certain persons to reflect on its causes. The ball when new was smoothly round, when new it 'ducked;' but when scored by the iron, several times cleaving its smooth roundness, it ceased to 'duck.' This looked, on the face of it, as if smoothness, contrary to all that a plain man would expect, was not a favourable condition to long flight. As confirmatory evidence it was seen that the old-fashioned feather balls, that flew well, were not smoothly globular, but had excrescences where the seams joined the several pieces of leather. From these observations the inference was simple, that the scoring of indentations and roughnesses on the ball aided its flight. Why not, then, score it to start with, instead of leaving the scoring to be done by ill-directed iron shots? And from this question it was but a step to hammering balls with the chisel end—that end that is normally used for the extraction of nails—of a hammer-head. The chisel end was specially widened for the purpose, made pretty sharp, and with this the 'gutty' balls, originally moulded smooth, were hammered, as it was called—that is to say, were scored all over with criss-cross indentations, much as we see the balls to-day. At first all this scoring was done with the chisel end of the hammer-head, and the writer as a boy well remembers the interest with which he used to watch poor Johnny Allan, at Westward Ho! turning the ball in a little wooden socket and scoring it with repeated hammer strokes. The professionals were very skilful at this hammering, and could finish off a ball in about two minutes.

This was the first stage of the really useful gutta-percha balls. The hammering was found, as expected, to increase their flight greatly, and they soon ran the expensive 'feather' balls off the market. The cost of the latter consisted chiefly in the labour—the stuffing of the balls into the leather coats with instruments specially made for the purpose was very laborious work, done by pressing with the chest against the instrument. The feathers had to be packed very tightly, and it

was said that the repeated pressing induced a pectoral complaint among the ball-makers, though others diagnosed this as a result of the fragments of feathers that the men engaged on the work inevitably inhaled. However that may be, the 'gutty' ball, by its cheapness, soon killed the other kind, and it is a change that is worthy of note in some detail, for it was really the cause that led to golf becoming popular. Previously the game had been too expensive for popularity. Four shillings a ball, and a very perishable article at that—for even heavy wet soddened the leather, so as to make the ball almost worthless—was a prohibitive price to the general. Golf in these days was in possession of a plutocracy, an oligarchic game. When it was made cheap it soon became democratic. So great was the boon of gutta-percha.

For some years—for a curiously long stretch of years—balls continued to be 'hand-hammered' in this primitive manner, until at length it occurred to some unknown genius to do the scoring in the mould by which the gutta-percha was compressed into the spherical shape. This again was a saving of labour. But for a time, as ever happens, there were Tories who had a prejudice against the 'machine-hammered' balls, as they were called. They had an idea that the hammering by hand hardened the ball; and even now we occasionally, very occasionally, meet with a man using a hand-hammered ball. But in the end the machine-made balls took the market, and they are the balls in present use, almost universally.

The reason that this scoring of the ball increased their length of flight remained a mystery to most golfers until Professor Tait took up the subject scientifically, and found the length of time that a well-driven ball remained in the air quite inconsistent with its initial velocity and the rest of the data from which mathematicians have worked out the formula of the flight of projectiles, except on the assumption of the rotation of the ball while in flight. Thence he inferred that a certain underspin on the ball is essential to length of

flight, and a ball thus scored must evidently grip the air, as it rotates more than a perfectly smooth ball, just as side on a billiard ball slowly travelling up the table deflects it more on a cloth whose nap is new than on one whose nap is worn smooth. The roughness of the new nap is analogous in its effect to the roughness on the scored ball. The details of the mathematical calculations would be beside the point here, even if the writer had the technical knowledge, in which he is sadly lacking, to express them properly; but the sum of the matter may be briefly stated by saying that rotation is a necessity for length of a golf ball's carry, and that the scoring or hammering is an aid to the rotation. Further than this let us not venture into the thorny ways of mathematics; golf assuredly has bunkers enough of its own.

None of the compounds into which gutta-percha entered so largely can be said to have fairly held their own against the pure article. The Eclipse ball threatened for a while to be a powerful rival. It was of softer, more elastic, material than the pure 'gutty,' flying scarcely as well, but deviating less from the straight line, whether the devious inclination given were due to the slicing off the club or to the simple effect of side wind. Therefore they were good balls in a high wind. And they putted extremely well, holding their way better than the 'gutty' ball over rough ground. The qualities that caused them to fall into comparative disuse were the somewhat shorter flight before noticed, and yet more, perhaps, the difficulty of making them fall at all dead from an approach stroke. These demerits were fatal to their general reception. For the rest they were very economical balls. Their elasticity seemed to give them the power of 'coming out again'—i.e. recovering their shape and symmetry—after the severest top with an iron. On the other hand, a drawback for which their very elasticity was to blame was the difficulty of inducing the paint to adhere properly. They seemed to jolt the paint, in patches, off themselves. They were heavier, size for size,

than the pure gutta-percha; therefore, to get the right weight, one had to use a smaller ball than the accepted size of 'gutties.'

None of the other compounds really competed with the gutta-percha pure and simple, and this brief account brings the history of the changes in ball-making practically up to date. All the world, roughly speaking, plays with gutta-percha balls. There are rival makers whose name is legion; rival patterns of scoring the ball, which scoring still keeps the name of 'hammering' and so records the early process. In this variety of 'hammering' there is a deal that is fanciful. The pattern matters little. What does seem to matter is that the scoring should be of sufficient depth. If not deep enough, the ball approximates too closely to the old smooth sphere that was found to go better after the iron had topped it once or twice. No doubt it is also possible to go to the opposite extreme—to have the nicking too deep, so that too much rotation is given—but this less often happens, because the paint fills the depths of the nicks. Probably a medium, if sufficient, depth of nicking is the best.

Far be it from the writer to endeavour to decide between the rival claims of Silvertowns, Agrippas, Slazengers, Melfort, and all the varieties. If a ball be well made, sufficiently nicked, kept for a while—say six months—after making, and painted about a month before use, so that the paint be neither so fresh as to be moist nor so old as to be brittle—finally, and chiefly, provided the material be of the best gutta-percha—the ball, under whatever name and with whatever nicking it fly, will hardly fail to fly far and sure. The days of rank bad balls are practically over; no one will play with them, and the competition is too severe for a really poor ball to stay long on the market.

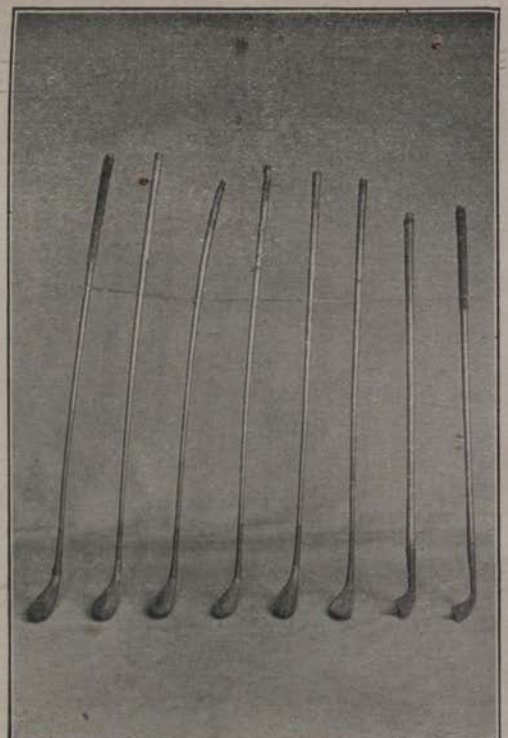
A word as to re-made balls—balls that have been used and are sent back to the mould to be recast. These are generally very good, quite as good as new balls if they were good originally and if they have not been too severely

hacked about before being sent to the re-moulder. The same remarks as to nicking apply to them as to new-made balls, and the same hints in regard to their keeping and painting, save that, seeing the bulk of their substance is already seasoned, it is not necessary to keep them as long before use as the brand-new ball. But no process of re-moulding can make good balls out of balls originally made of inferior 'gutty.' These are merely the maxims of common sense, confirmed by experience, but it does not seem that they are always honoured in their just degree.

The history of golf clubs is a story of fashion's changes. Mr. Bagehot was very strong on the effect of imitation in moulding racial character—imitation of some 'master-mind,' as we should say to-day, but in those days it was more a question of 'master-muscle.' So it has been with golf clubs. The world has followed the lead of genius, endeavouring to imitate the inimitable. The earliest clubs that we have any notice of are those that the museum at St. Andrews[1] contains. They are serviceable weapons, and fully confirm the prevalent idea that the whins covered most of the St. Andrews links at the time of their use. Also, they furnish part of the explanation of the disappearance of the whins. They appear to our cultivated taste to belong to an era of bush-whacking golf; yet, doubtless, there were brave men before Agamemnon or Allan Robertson. A possible rival of these old clubs in age may be that quaint battleaxe that Mr. Andrew Lang got from Holland (or was it Flanders?—at all events, M. Zola says the natives drive four hundred yards with it, and, after that, such a little detail as a point in geography is of no importance). This club has a terrific iron block of a head, excellent for stone-breaking, cleverly contrived to be a spoon one way and a driver or putter—something flat-faced, at all events—the other? One hundred yards is about the maximum

[1] Appended to this chapter is an account, taken by permission from the *Times*, of a set of very old clubs found in pulling down a house in Hull. Illustrations are also given from photograph.

that a British champion can drive with the thing. Perhaps this club, after all, is not so much old as old-fashioned. It seems incomprehensibly difficult to arrive at any knowledge of the game as played by these Lowlanders. The Dutch tiles show some sort of a game, but do not illustrate it clearly, and though many have tried to arrive at the exact nature of the game of the Netherlands, no one in England that the writer has heard of has arrived there yet. In the days of Scottish Parliaments it is evident that they used to import golf balls from Holland, for the Parliament expressly told them they were not to, thus fostering the native industry. No one, however, has ever been accused of trying to import the clubs, except by way of curiosities and cautions. The first actually historical golfers—whose deeds are not shrouded in the mists of legend—probably played with Hugh Philp's clubs. They were beautiful specimens of art, finely finished, elegant, long-headed things—a fine graduated series of spoons, wooden putter, very few iron clubs, neither niblick nor mashy nor brassy yet invented. The late Sir Hew Dalrymple had a very perfect set that he gave to Mr. J. E. Laidlay, who preserves them—an interesting relic—in a glass case. The point about them that most strikes the modern golfer is their extraordinary—in his experience—length of head, but in point of fact this was not in the least extraordinary at the time, but only typical. All clubs were long-headed; and when the modern innovation of the short-headed clubs came in, the new broad-headed fellows were looked on as the most astonishing departures from the type. The process of departure may be traced quite easily; but to be chronological it is as well to say that before it began clubs had already, while still keeping their long-headed form, begun to grow heavier and stiffer, less elegant in appearance, showing some sign of reverting to the old type of days before Hugh Philp, such as the museum at St. Andrews preserves for us. Then, be it remembered, there was no such club as a brassy; but the niblick had been invented for getting out of lies that the



SET OF OLD CLUBS.

SET OF HUGH PHILP CLUBS.

old 'sand iron' would hardly cope with, though the mashy was yet unborn.

It was in this condition of affairs that it occurred to some golfer of original genius, sharpened by long playing on a rutty green, that the ball might be played out of a cart-rut or a sheep track, or any narrow cut of like nature, a deal more satisfactorily if only the heads of wooden clubs were not so long. Therefore, this genius devised a short-headed club of wood, so short that it would nicely fit into an ordinary sheep track. Then, seeing that already among the iron clubs there was a short-headed one designed for similar lies of less dreadful degree, he made a name for his club out of analogy, and called his club a wooden niblick. This was the manner, according to the present writer's observation, of the introduction of short-headed clubs. At first such short-headed clubs were deemed quite an abnormal make, and designed for a special purpose—the getting out of a narrow cleft. The club, in fact, began to be used for a purpose for which iron-headed clubs had been exclusively employed before, and since it was found that in using them in all sorts and conditions of queer places the sole of the club was apt to be much injured by striking stones and other unyielding bodies, it further occurred to the genius of invention to screw a bit of brass on the sole of the club—whence the origin of the brassy. At first the wooden niblicks were made without the brass—the latter was only an afterthought—but by degrees the name taken from the fact of the brassed sole superseded the name originally given. Now we no longer hear the wooden niblick spoken of, but every man calls for his brassy.

The brassy, however, continued to keep the short bulldog shape that belonged to its original intention, though it soon became generally apparent that this practically new weapon was quite able to do all the work that had previously been done by the various spoons that the old-time golfer carried, and that we see preserved in the set of clubs made by Hugh Philp, and given by Sir Hew Dalrymple to Mr. Laidlay.

In the meantime the use of one of these spoons, the shortest, named the 'baffy,' and used for short shots up to the hole, had been practically abandoned, and superseded by the approaching or lofting iron. On this head the writer cannot speak from personal knowledge, for the change took place before his golfing days; but rumour has it that it was chiefly the genius of young Tom Morris in approaching with the iron that led all and sundry to follow his example, and discard the use of the baffy in favour of the lofting iron. Young Tom would also, on occasion, approach with his niblick, already invented for the special purpose of getting out of very evil lies; and, some years later, the niblick seeming to present rather too small a face to the ball for accurate hitting by the ordinary player, the mashy was introduced as a sort of compromise between the niblick and the lofting iron, possessing some of the best capabilities of both.

When the golfing world had thus arrived at the possession of the short-headed brassy, the question almost inevitably suggested itself: What is the use of all this length in our club-heads? Would it not be better and more furthersome if we were to make our driver heads, too, shorter, and so mass the weight more behind the point on which the ball is struck? Both reflection and experience seemed to say that the contention was just, and at all events it was on these lines that the club-heads began to be modified.

And then came the invention of the 'bulger,' the round-faced club, of which the honour is generally accorded to the late Mr. Henry Lamb, himself a fine golfer with all his clubs. The practical merit of this invention has not been quite what it is generally understood to be. When first the convex-shaped clubs were made there was a prejudice against them—naturally; it did not seem in reason that it could be at all easy to drive straight with the round-faced things. But by degrees we all began to learn the truth that, contrary to reasonable expectation, they made straight driving a deal easier.

Some argued, possibly correctly, that even if they did aid in straight driving it was only because the angle of the face corrected the slice given by hitting on toe or heel, but that the remedy was worse than the disease, because, with the bulger, it was possible for a man to go on heeling or toeing contentedly, and so losing a deal of distance, but in blissful unconsciousness of his error, because the curving away of the ball to right or left that happened off a straight-faced club did not now occur to inform him of his evil doings. Thus he remained sunken in secret error. This opinion, however, was that of a minority, rather, and the bulger made its way into popular favour.

But what is the position of the bulger to-day, a decade or more after its invention? Nearly every man, as it seems, imagines himself to be driving with a bulger; and, in point of fact, most clubs are made with the faces slightly convex. But in a stroke or two, by the impact of the ball, all this bulge is beaten in, the club-face becomes perfectly flat, and in nine cases out of ten certainly—and probably the proportion is far larger—you will not find the slightest trace of the bulge on any of the drivers in use that you may take up and examine. But this is not to say that the cult of the bulger has made no difference; for whereas, of those clubs that you will now examine, nine out of ten at least will have their faces flat, in the old days, before the bulger's time, nine out of every ten wooden clubs had their faces very perceptibly concave. This, therefore, is the practical result of the invention of the bulger, that it has put into general use clubs whose faces are practically flat in place of those whose faces were distinctly concave. And this is assuredly a change for the better, for even if there was a latent evil in the original bulger, which we do not readily admit, in that it concealed the existence of fatal errors, most certainly these concave faces erred in the opposite and far more dangerous extreme of exaggerating every hook and every slice to enormous dimensions. Thus, even if we find our own clubs

perfectly flat-faced, and may deliberately prefer this shape, we can still look upon the invention of the bulger as a boon in having given to the general use of golfers clubs that are flat instead of concave in the face.

Since that important change no alteration of very great importance has taken place in the make of golf clubs. A comparatively new club is the driving mashy, but that is nothing more or less than a short-headed cleek. Iron putters have generally superseded the use of wooden putters, but iron putters, though not so extensively used in the olden days, were in the land even then. Lately a fashion has set in favouring short and light drivers. The fashion was set chiefly by Harry Vardon, who came to eminence by winning the championship at Muirfield a year or two ago, after a tie with Taylor, who had been champion in both the previous years. Vardon, driving easily and gracefully, gets very long balls from his light clubs, and probably the average of golfing execution has improved in consequence of others following his lead.[1]

We may say that practically no materials have been found better than good hickory for the shafts and good beech for the heads; for though trial has been made of various curious woods, and of aluminium, with wedges of wood, of leather, and of gutta-percha for the face, none of these have found any abiding favour in general estimation, though the aluminium-headed clubs, as being more durable, may be of use in the colonies and out-of-the-way corners where club-makers and repairers are hard to come by. To give instruction to a man as to the kind of club he should use is an impossibility without knowledge of his build, his swing, and his suppleness of muscle. One who swings slowly can use a heavier, and also a more whippy, club than one whose swing is naturally quick. At the present time most of the

[1] Since writing the above we learn that Vardon, who now seems to be playing better than ever, has increased the weight of his clubs a good deal, while still keeping to the short shafts.

professionals seem to be using short and rather stiff clubs, rather light in the head. Certainly the lightening and shortening, according to the modern fancy, does not seem to have made any general reduction, but rather the contrary, in the length of driving. Andrew Kirkaldy is credited with the dictum that the lighter the club the longer the driving, and we must all recognise that the essential requisite for long driving, always provided that the ball be properly struck, is that the club-head shall be moving at great speed at the moment that it meets the ball. And it is easier to get this great speed of movement into a light club-head than a heavy one. It is possible to exaggerate the extremes on either side until the club becomes either too light or too heavy to drive the ball at all, and a close match might be played by one man with a crowbar against another with a walking-stick; but the driving on neither side would be very long. So probably the virtue lies somewhere in the mean—not an absolute mean, but a mean relative to the muscular power of the man that is to use the club. A certain amount of play and spring in the shaft is good, but it must not be too much; a certain hardness of head is good, or it will too soon be battered to pieces, but it must not be too hard or it will not drive. In this case—indeed, in either of these cases—a leather face is the remedy, and a very good remedy too, for the leather will drive just as well as wood.

It is to be remembered that the apparent weight of a club depends a great deal on the length of shaft. A heavy head will not feel as heavy in the hand at the end of a short shaft as a head an ounce lighter at the end of a shaft several inches longer. J. Rowe, of the Ashdown Forest Club, told the writer that he was greatly puzzled by the length of ball that a certain gentleman drove with a club that was obviously very short, and apparently very light. It happened, however, that he had to take off the head of one of these clubs, and for curiosity put it in the balance, when he found to his astonishment that the head he had supposed so light weighed in

reality nearly eight ounces. It was the shortness of the shaft that had made the head appear so light, and without doubt, in spite of the theory as to length of driving varying directly with the lightness of the club-head, this weight, so-concealed, must have had something to say to the length of its master's driving. Possibly the truth is that at the end of a short shaft we can give relatively quicker movement to a heavy head, but at the end of a long shaft quicker to a light one. And, speaking in moderation, it seems as if we ought to be able to strike the ball with a short-shafted club with greater certainty.

The set of clubs with which the modern golfer deems himself fairly and sufficiently equipped consists of driver, brassy, cleek or driving mashy (generally the latter, as being better fitted for finding its way into small holes), driving iron, mashy, putter, and (on a green of sandy bunkers) niblick. With these he should be armed at all points. The driving-iron will serve for a running approach, the mashy for the lofted ones, which are more frequently useful. The putter, by modern usage, is of iron; but some carry a wooden putter besides, for running up long putts. Moreover, it is useful to have an alternative putter in your set, for often, if you are completely 'off' with the putting weapon that you ordinarily use, a change will have wonderfully good results. Of the 'baffy,' or short approaching spoon, we have spoken as of a discarded weapon; but a few use it still, and for those who find the successful and scientific use of the iron insuperably difficult we would strongly recommend a trial of this little club.

Of the many kinds of patent clubs we do not find it useful to press the claims of any but one, and that one is the Fairlie mashy. The feature of these clubs, invented by that very excellent golfer Mr. Frank Fairlie, is that the blade is set on in advance of the shaft. One effect of this is that it is impossible with them to fall into that most desperate state of affliction which expresses itself by striking the ball

with the 'hose'—that is, with the iron part of the shaft (if this Hibernicism may be used). This perhaps is a point that does not affect the scratch player; he practically never falls into this affliction, and for such a one it might be a dangerous experiment to make such a radical change in his weapons after arriving at full years of golfing maturity; but if we had a young family to bring up to golf we should certainly equip them all with these clubs of Mr. Fairlie's—who is himself a past master in their use—believing that it may save them much subsequent suffering. But there is a special point about the Fairlie mashy that makes it a useful club in the hands of the very best. Let us suppose a ball in a bad cuppy lie; the ordinary mashy that we should use for this sad occasion has the blade set on, say, half an inch behind the hose. The end of this hose, then, forming the extreme heel of the club, has to go down half an inch into this cup before the blade can reach the ball at all. With the Fairlie mashy, having its blade in advance of the hose, the extreme heel of the club is formed by the rear portion of the blade itself. This blade, therefore, will have a whole half-inch advantage of the other—it will reach the ball half an inch sooner—and no part of the club-head will have to find its way into this difficult little cup before the blade comes fairly home upon the ball. It is a point that is not very easily to be explained in written words, but a glance at the two clubs, side by side, will serve better than pages of description to show the advantage here claimed for the Fairlie club.

A good club—that is to say, a club that suits you—deserves good treatment, like a good servant. It is ruination to wooden clubs to use them on a grassy course after rain, and a 'scratch pack,' kept to save the better sort, will be useful in the circumstances. On the other hand, if a club be put away in cotton wool, as something ultra-precious and only to be used on great occasions, it is often found to disappoint expectation sadly when the great occasion comes. If you are playing well with a club, continue to play with it, except in heavy

wet, in hard frost, or in any of the circumstances that are fatal to a club's well-being. After use in the wet, oil, or cause to be oiled, the heads of clubs, and also the shafts if, on drying, they begin to wear a 'staring' appearance. But be cautious of oiling the shafts of clubs often, for the oil is apt to soften them and take the 'steel' out of them. Nevertheless, when a shaft becomes too dry it is apt to grow brittle and snap off, unless oiled occasionally. In oiling the heads be careful not to oil the faces. These should never under any circumstances be oiled. Passing the file over them will restore them from the effects of wet and wear, unless they be too far gone, in which case a leather face is the right remedy.

Iron-headed clubs after a time become too thin in the blade in consequence of the constant application of emery paper in cleaning them. A device has been introduced of coating with nickel the face of the club, and indeed all the iron part, which obviates the necessity of this scrubbing with the emery paper and consequent waste of its tissue; but the plan has its objections. The nickel is very slippery and shiny. Possibly it may be a sentimental objection, but it does not seem to get a good grip of the ball. A better plan seems to be to tin the iron—to dip it in melted tin, having previously wetted the iron with salts of soda to form a flux with the oxide of iron. It is scarcely needful to say that the head must be taken off the shaft before this treatment is applied to it. The tinning has the same advantages as the nickeling in obviating the necessity of cleansing with any wearing powder, and it does not give the face quite such a slippery surface.

I notice that at the present time most of the professionals are affecting very thick-shafted clubs, most of them stiff and short. These thick-shafted clubs are no doubt good, provided they are not 'lazy'—that is to say, provided the shaft, after being bent, consents to come back quickly and not in a sleepy, lifeless manner. This is a good test of a shaft. J. H. Taylor, in a match that he played in the early spring

of 1898 against Braid, at Wimbledon, gave a very good object-lesson in the value of short clubs. Taylor has not had the reputation of being a very long driver. Braid's reputation, on the other hand, has been chiefly won by his length of drive, but on the occasion under notice Braid was not appreciably shorter than his wont, and yet Taylor was fully up to him. And this was immediately after the latter had drastically shortened his driving clubs. If the increased length of his drives was not the direct consequence of the diminished length of his clubs, then accident must have been playing queer practical jokes with the law of cause and effect. We may take it that the two—the lengthened drive and the shortened driver—did, in fact, stand to each other in relation of effect to cause. It is an object-lesson not without its significance.

Whatever the length of club shaft, the weight of head must have some relation to it. It is well to know exactly what your length of shaft is, and what your weight of head. This is useful knowledge when you come to order new clubs.

There is much in the 'lie' of clubs, not only in the angle of the neck, but also in the manner in which the club-head lies to the ground. It should lie close, with no corners or angles tilting it up; it should grip the ground well. There is one maker whose club-heads, to my thinking, have this merit beyond others that I have tried, but to name him would perhaps savour of advertisement. As Disraeli said, however: 'An agreeable man is a man that agrees with me;' so too, 'A good driver is a driver that I can do well with.' That is the best proof of the pudding—the eating.

It is fairly easy to apply this test to a club; either you can drive with it or you cannot, and the distances, as compared with the distances of drives off other clubs, are easily gauged. But it is not quite so easy to apply this most practical of tests to balls. You are apt to think that there is some difference in your manner of hitting that affects the length of their flight and run more than any difference in

themselves. Probably you are right; again, the best ball is the ball you can hit best. But balls are comparatively good and bad in themselves too, and you can apply certain tests to them other than those that actual play affords.

Some balls float in water, and though this is perhaps an economy where water lies much on the course and the player is not very skilful, this flotation is not a sign of a good ball. It is a sign that the ball is specifically too light. Then you may apply the test by mercury; and here it may be said, by the bye, that it is not at all easy to put a golf ball on the baulk line of a billiard table and hole it slowly into one of the top pockets. So untrue is gutta-percha. So you will not expect the test by mercury—the test of putting the ball afloat on a little mercury sea and asking it to rest as readily in one position as in another—you will not expect this test to give as true an answer as if a billiard ball were the subject of your experiment. That would be asking too much. Still it will give you an indication about some of its qualities.

Another quality that you may test—but it is a test that is applicable to the pure gutta-percha balls only—is its bouncing elasticity off a stone floor; of any two gutta-percha balls, the better, other things being equal, will bound higher. Other things are not always equal. Sometimes a ball too 'china-y' hard to be good off a golf club will bound highest off a stone floor. Most balls, like most golfers, have the defects of their qualities. Your aim will be to find the ball that combines the most qualities with the fewest defects.

The ordeal by fire is not to be despised. A ball that is largely made up of some composition into which pitch enters as a big ingredient, will melt at a much lower temperature than a ball of pure gutta-percha. And pure gutta-percha is the best.

The weight of ball must surely be relative to the strength of the striker and the weight of the weapon he strikes with, but it seems pretty certain that we make a common error in playing with too small balls. Especially is this a weakness

of modern golfers. The older school—Mr. Robert Clarke, for instance, author of the famous book, and Mr. Doleman—played with balls that seemed gigantic. They seemed to be always in the way; perpetually stimying. Nowadays a reaction is setting in from the small balls we have been using for some years; is it, perchance, that the makers have preferred to sell us small balls because they take less gutta-percha, or is it that we have had a vain fancy that we can drive a small ball further? No doubt that fancy is vain; we have been proving it vain. Many golfers are finding that they can drive further with a 28 than with any smaller balls, and perhaps the maximum of reasonable size has not yet been reached. Other arguments are all in favour of the big ball. There is more of it to hit; this is a line of logic that every one can follow. Being big it is less likely to rest in a small cup, and is less buried if it do rest there. Its size and weight make it pass without notice stiff blades of grass and excrescences that would have turned a lighter ball aside. Therefore it is a good ball to putt with; and it is a beautiful ball for laying a stimy.

The limit of reasonable size must, of course, be reached. This was brought home to the writer lately in course of playing that game to which some degenerates have likened golf—croquet, to wit. We all know that hoops nowadays are small and balls are big; therefore the writer was not at all surprised at two vain efforts to get through the first hoop, but at a third 'vain repetition' suspicion was aroused, measurement was taken, and the ball was found to have a diameter just one-sixteenth of an inch more than the space between the wires of the hoop. It was an extra large ball that had got into its wrong set—as we all do sometimes. But it made the game just a little too difficult, and it showed the logical maximum: you must not have the ball any larger than the hoop. Similarly, at golf you must not have the ball any larger than the hole. Somewhere between that extreme and the 26 balls that we loved to play with a few years

ago the ideal is to be found. All men's ideals are not the same, but probably most of us are erring on the side of too small balls to-day.[1]

It is not possible to err on the side of having balls too new. Rich men ought to play with a new ball for every hole, both for their own sake and for that of trade. It is not only when a ball is so hacked and distorted as to be of any shape rather than truly spherical that it ceases to be as good as it was. Even some of those balls which a player will show us with pride—we are not quite sure whether the pride is really more in himself, who has not topped the ball, than in the ball that has not been topped—are not as good as they seem to be. 'Look at it, my dear fellow,' he says; 'I've played three rounds with it and there's not a mark on it!'

Quite true, and very creditable, and it may be that the ball is quite round too, but if you were to submit it to the bouncing test you would find that in spite of all its merits of long-suffering it had lost a deal in youth and elasticity by the destruction of its fibre under dint of the golfer's blows.

Also a club will never drive so well after it has a blemish in it—until, of course, that blemish is remedied. Any looseness of glue or lead, any crack, takes yards off its driving. It is still true that the good club is the club you drive well with, and you may still drive better with this cripple than with any other club, but that is not to say that the club is as good as before it received its injury.

Some players like a brand-new club. Probably this is because, unconsciously, with a new and unfamiliar weapon the eye recognises the necessity of keeping itself more steadfastly on the ball. Mr. Laidlay at one time used to buy and use a new brassy every time he went out to play a big

[1] Very lately a ball smaller than any that has been tried before, called the 'Bullet,' has found a good deal of favour. Possibly a small ball, could we get it of equal weight with the bigger, would fly further; but it is impossible to dogmatise about it at all.

match. Most men, however, will play better with the club that comes familiarly to hand.

By the courtesy of the proprietors of the 'Times' I am permitted to append to this chapter a most interesting account of a set of old clubs found in a house at Hull, and by the kindness of Mr. Adam Wood, of the Troon Golf Club, can give illustrations, from photographs, of their peculiarities of shape and make. The account appeared in the 'Times' of August 15, 1898.

'There has recently come into the possession of Mr. Adam Wood, manager of the Duke of Portland at Troon, and ex-captain of Troon Golf Club, a set of clubs that are quite unique as being by far the oldest extant implements for the practice of golf, as well as being without doubt the most ancient relics connected with the game. The clubs themselves bear the impress of great age, and the circumstances under which they were discovered some months ago confirm their antiquity. It is not a little suggestive that they came to light south of the Tweed, and not in Scotland, from which everything that is old connected with the game is supposed to emanate. The clubs were found in the town of Hull. They came into the possession of the present owner through Mr. W. T. Hammond, manufacturer, Skeldon, Ayrshire, to whom they were sent by Mr. J. C. Sykes, merchant, Hull. Mr. Sykes is the proprietor of an old mansion which is now, and has been for many years, occupied by him as business premises, but which was during the greater part of last century the residence of a family of burgesses of the town named Maisters. The house was, while in their possession, burned down in the year 1700, some members of the family losing their lives in the fire, and the tenement then rebuilt is that which stands at the present day, and is No. 160 High Street. In the course of some recent internal structural alterations a boarded-up cupboard or closet was discovered, the existence of which till then had not been suspected, and in this receptacle, along with a quantity of old documents,

among them a Yorkshire newspaper bearing the date of 1741, were the old golf clubs. How they came to be deposited in that place, to whom they belonged, who played golf with them, and what club-maker designed and made them, are matters which may or may not be eventually determined. It is certain in any case that we owe it to their having been laid away in this forgotten recess that they have escaped destruction, and that they have been preserved intact to the present day. Whether or not they belonged to the Maisters family is a matter for speculation, but, as some of the members of that family were of the military profession, it is not improbable, for, as they would be transferred from one military depôt to another, it might well be supposed that they came into playing relations with the game of golf very possibly in Scotland. Be that as it may, however, we may assume that the clubs were deposited where they were recently found some time after the fire, which they could not have survived, and the end of the century. That, if it were the only evidence by which to measure the age of the clubs, gives a very wide margin. There is, however, other testimony which seems to establish the antiquity of the clubs, testimony which would appear to throw them back at least to the earliest of these dates. The character of the clubs themselves could hardly fail, even on a casual examination, to carry conviction to the mind of an unskilled observer that they have come down to us from a far-distant past. To the golfer a comparison of them with old clubs of known age furnishes evidence that they are the survival of a stage of the game that is long anterior to the beginning of the present century. There are a considerable number of clubs of known age preserved as relics in various club houses on both sides of the Border, which are from seventy to a hundred years old. These look antiquated as compared with the clubs now used on the links, but they are quite modern as compared with the clubs under consideration. The golf club, like most other implements, has been constantly changing, and our

latter-day clubs are the result of a marked evolution from those used in the practice of the game a hundred years ago. The change of fashion is not so great nor so apparent in this case as between the century old clubs and the earlier specimens. The design and especially the workmanship stamp these latter with the impress of belonging to a remote condition of society in which the arts and crafts were in a less advanced stage than even a century ago, and warrant us in deciding that the best part of two centuries at least has elapsed since these golf clubs were made. How far they in their turn are removed from their prototype it is of course impossible to say, but it may be inferred that they are a considerable advance in the process of adaptability. It may be mentioned that Mr. Balfour, the leader of the House of Commons, has seen the clubs, and gives it as his opinion that they may belong to the period of the Stuart Kings.

'The clubs evidently form a set used by a golfer of the time. The set consists of six wooden clubs and two iron clubs. One of the things that would strike a golfer is that they must have been designed and made by the same person, and that person a golfer and experienced club-maker. Their finish would denote that, were there not also certain delicate differences in the matter of spooning that would attract the attention only of a golfer. The clubs are all noticeably heavier in the head and longer in the shaft, and in all respects bigger, than modern clubs. The wooden clubs comprised drivers and spoons, there being nothing corresponding to the brassy and the putter, and the heads are of unequal weight and the shafts of unequal length; and the iron clubs appear to correspond to our cleeks and irons of to-day, but are much heavier and clumsier, while a thick coating of rust adds to the uncomeliness of their appearance. The iron might be described as being as much of a niblick as an iron, so evidently is it adapted to playing in sand. It is a formidable-looking implement, and has more the appearance of a weapon than a golf club. Its weight is 28 oz., as compared with

16½ oz., the weight of the irons with which Fernie, the ex-champion, plays. This is a very remarkable difference. The length of the club from the top of the shaft to the ground is 43½ in., about 4 in. longer than Fernie's iron. The greater part of the additional weight is in the head, but the shaft, which is a very stout piece of wood, materially contributes thereto. The face is hollowed out to an extent that seems exaggerated to our ideas, and the concavity is that, in greater degree, which has been made the subject of a recent patent. One of the characteristics of the head is that the sole, which is three-quarters of an inch broad, is prolonged into a sharp spur beyond the nose, which was clearly meant, like the coulter of a plough, for cutting purposes. The head is altogether a piece of rough blacksmith work with a socket 3½ in. in circumference, into which the shaft is fixed in exactly the way it is fixed at the present day. The cleek, which might be named an iron, is of dimensions and character in keeping with the iron. The wooden clubs are also built on the same general plan as those of the present day, but there is a marked variance in the size of the head and the length of the shaft. In every case they have a flatter lie—that is, have a greater angle between the shaft and the sole of the club—which is to some extent accounted for by the great length of the shaft. The whole appearance of the clubs is in striking contrast with the style and finish of the clubs which golfers are now accustomed to handle. The longest of them has a shaft that is 6 in. longer than the driver Fernie uses, and measuring the two clubs from the nose along the sole to the top of the shaft Fernie's is 46 in. and the old club is 54 in., also a very remarkable difference. The head is abnormally large according to modern ideas. There is at least twice as much wood in it as in the average club of the present day. The difference in weight of the two clubs is about 4 oz., and most of the extra weight is in the head, which has the lead inserted at the back, as usual. The general character of this part of the club furnishes as great a

Ancient and Modern.

contrast with the corresponding part of the modern club as the head of a collie does with the head of a bulldog. Though they are not such efficient-looking instruments as those universally adopted now, they are certainly not lacking in elegance of design, and in that respect, if not in superiority of finish, they bear favourable comparison with the modern article. There is no alteration of the attachment of the head to the shaft. Then, as now, they were bound together with cord prepared with pitch. The cord is rotten, in spite of the pitch, with age. The grips are, however, essentially different. Three of the clubs have no added grip at all, and it is not certain if they ever had. The grip of the others consists of a single thickness of coarse woollen selvedge wound round the shaft and fixed thereon by its ends with horse nails bent into the form of a staple. The now universal sheepskin over the woollen wrapping was then evidently unknown. From the fact that the shafts are in some cases a good deal bent we gather that they were natural sticks straightened and dressed. The wood of the head is not unlike apple-tree, and of the shafts not unlike hickory.

'Perhaps, however, the most interesting feature of the clubs is a stamped device which every one of them bears. The apparently black colouring matter used in the impression has grown very dim and is much defaced, but as it has been repeated forty-four times over the clubs its details are certain. Essentially it consists of a figure whose outline may be described as a rhombus with the obtuse angles rounded, or an ellipse with the ends run to a point, containing a series of characters. In the upper angle there is a royal crown, in the lower a Scotch thistle, in the middle between those emblems a five-rayed star, on the left-hand side of the star the letter I (which may stand for J), and on the right hand side of the star the letter C. The specific characters are isolated and of the natural colour of the wood, while the ground was black, so that the figure must have been

impressed by stamping and not by stencilling—a common form of mechanical reproduction in early days. The outline of the characters is rude and irregular. In the case of the wooden clubs the imprint is placed on the head where the name of the maker is now found, and in the case of the irons it is placed on the shaft adjacent to the grip. On each of the wooden clubs the figure is repeated six times, so as to imitate the general shape of the original, and on the iron clubs four times with the same intent. What relationship this combination of letters and symbols bears to the clubs, whether it denotes ownership or identifies the maker, cannot be said with certainty; but it may be assumed that the letters do represent the name of the maker, and that the symbols may denote a special permission on the part of one or other of the Kings of Scotland, equivalent to a monopoly of the kind that is granted to certain tradesmen of to-day in the use of the royal arms. That the markings furnish data which would throw light on the primary history of these interesting old clubs if they could be interpreted is not to be doubted, but there can be no hesitation in deciding that the clubs belong to a very early period in the unwritten history of the game of golf, and that they bridge over a considerable hiatus in the continuity of that history. To the antiquary they are of much interest; but to the golfer they are of surpassing interest, as showing what manner of implements they were with which his ancestors, at some remote if indefinite period, practised the game of golf.'

CHAPTER XI

LAYING-OUT AND UP-KEEP OF GREENS

By Messrs. Sutton & Sons, of Reading

To deal in a general way with grasses suitable for golf courses is, contrary to the usual effect, to limit the extent of the subject. Courses vary so much as to soil, altitude, aspect, and the rainfall of their district, that our remarks must be reduced to only those which admit of the widest application. The best results can only be expected by considering the peculiar conditions of each individual case. Grasses, too, vary within considerable limits according to their surroundings. We have seen specimens of desirable turves from certain links consisting of grasses which no one would ever think of employing under any other than precisely similar circumstances. The native or indigenous herbage, therefore, is of the greatest importance and an unfailing guide in the selection of the best grasses for any given locality.

There are only a few grasses that can be recommended in a general way as really adapted for the purpose. Golfers are so particular, especially on the greens, where the turf must be of the closest, finest, firmest nature, and absolutely homogeneous, or their putts may be spoiled. Hard-wearing qualities, too, are indispensable, seeing that the game is played all the year round irrespective of seasons. Notwithstanding that the choice of grasses is so narrowed down, yet there remains the importance of the proper and relative proportions the sorts should bear to each other on different soils.

During the past decade golf has attained such great popularity that links are to be found in every county and on the extremes of geological formations. There are the links on sandy coasts, on chalk downs, and on every other nature of soil, not excepting the heavy clays of the old wheat-producing districts. It will be advisable, therefore, to first determine the principal grasses which are found on courses generally throughout the country, taking these as a base, and then consider the species which should also go towards the making of good turves on the different typical soils.

The few grasses which, from the fact that they are found on all the best links, may justly be called 'golf grasses,' are :

Festuca rubra, or red fescue; the finer species of Agrostis; Festuca ovina, or sheep's fescue; Festuca duriuscula, or hard fescue; Poa pratensis, or smooth-stalked meadow grass; and dwarf perennial rye grass, all of which are compact-growing, not too exacting as to habitat, and which, when properly kept down, go a long way towards the production of that close velvety turf which players look for on good putting greens. Next to the selection of grasses themselves, mowing and rolling, together with judicious manuring, are the most important factors in the formation of really fine swards; for it is by these means that it is possible to simulate in a comparatively short time the firm tough sods of our old commons and sheep downs, the result of the close-biting and treading of animals for many years.

Taking the above sorts, then, as a base, we will deal with the sandy links of the sea coast and the few of similar character to be found inland. Here the great difficulty is the lack of moisture or the power of retaining it, and only those grasses of a widely creeping habit can be expected to survive in trying seasons. Festuca rubra and the smaller species of Agrostis are seen to the greatest advantage on such courses, and should form the principal constituents of the turf, supplemented by sheep's and hard fescues, Poa pratensis, and dwarf perennial rye grass.

The same species in different proportions will answer admirably also on all light and gravelly soils liable to 'burn.'

On chalk soils the want of moisture-retaining power has still to be contended with, and these grasses will again be found best to clothe the surface with a dense turf. The proportion of sheep's fescue may be increased and dogstail (Cynosurus cristatus) added.

For free-working loamy soils a wider range of grasses present themselves for choice. It is here that the dwarf perennial rye grass is at its best, but still Festuca rubra, Agrostis, and Poa pratensis should predominate, and a considerable proportion of sheep's fescue, hard fescue, and Poa trivialis can be advantageously included.

Heavy loams and clay soils will require Poa trivialis and Agrostis as the foundation of the turf, together with the other 'golf grasses' excepting Poa pratensis. These latter, however, will be in smaller proportions than in turves for light or burning soils.

For the course itself, where such a fine turf is not so essential as on the greens, the same grasses in varying proportions will answer perfectly on their respective soils, but they will not be mown so closely.

Clovers, as a rule, are not to be recommended. Their herbage is much too soft, and, being broader, holds moisture longer than grasses. There are, however, some light soils on which grasses take very poorly except in company with leguminous herbage, and here clovers are not only tolerable but desirable. The most suitable species are: white clover (Trifolium repens), yellow suckling (Trifolium minus), and trefoil or hop clover (Medicago lupulina). These are the hardest and finest leaved of their family, and would not be generally considered objectionable through the course. On the greens, where the limited area admits of thorough preparation of the soil, clovers always spoil the homogeneity of the turf. In dry weather they grow in patches and overpower the grasses, and usually prove a nuisance. Lotus

corniculatus, the bird's-foot trefoil, has been used, and some fine large beds of it may be seen, but it does not appear to combine and make a turf with grasses, always occurring in masses. It is certainly less suitable than the clovers above mentioned.

Condition of soil is largely responsible for the sod. It is a costly experiment to attempt to grow fine turf where the soil has not been first brought into a fit state to support it, and the expense for the maintenance of many links, and of the greens particularly, would be reduced to a minimum if the early work had been carried out more thoroughly. For the benefit of the greens which have yet to be made, or remade, and for the sake of true economy, liberal treatment of the soil must be urged. In every case a heavy dressing of well-rotted farmyard or stable manure, adding some good loam to thin soils, will fully repay the cost of its application and show beneficial results for many subsequent years.

The most difficult links on which to obtain a satisfactory and enduring sward are those over sand and clay. The undulating sandy stretches of our coasts are the golfer's ideals of soil and situation, and many excellent courses exist where Nature unaided was unable to produce sufficient herbage to hold the sand together. But a dry season is disastrous to the turf on such links. A dressing of marl, applied at the time the greens are made, will obviate interminable work in later years, and produce a verdant spot in droughty seasons when surrounding herbage has given up. Marl supplies valuable constituents of plant-food wanting in sand, and retains moisture as well as manures, which otherwise drain away as soon as they become assimilable. The incorporation of the marl with the sand, however, must be complete. Any underlying patches of the heavier soil will be plainly indicated on the surface by the stronger growth of those grasses which possess an affinity for it.

In a similar way, sand added to a clay soil will effect a permanent improvement in the turf if the drainage is not

seriously at fault. The clay will become 'warmer,' and more readily give up part of the huge store of plant-food which it usually holds locked up in an unavailable condition.

It is impossible to avoid reference to the relative merits of the use of seeds and turf. If turf be employed, then the intelligent combination of grasses is altogether out of the question. However good it may be, turf invariably suffers from being moved, and often takes a long time to recover its former condition. On the other hand, apart from the great saving in cost, seeds of suitable grasses native to the soil can be selected which will quickly cover the ground, and with liberal management the sward may be made fit for play in very little longer time than is necessary for the settling down of turves and the production of sufficient fresh growth.

On the great majority of links which have been hurriedly laid out in recent years to accommodate the enormously increasing number of golfers, any turf sufficiently tenacious to be cut, rolled, and carried has been considered the proper thing for the making up of the greens. Such turf has unfortunately too often largely consisted of coarse and unsuitable grasses and miscellaneous weeds, and the greens cannot prove otherwise than a source of constant vexation and expense. And even in cases where only the very best turf obtainable has been employed, a serious falling off in quality has taken place, because in many instances the turf has originated on a totally different soil, and only those grasses survived which could adapt themselves to the new conditions.

The necessity of manure is suggested by the thin and mossy greens so frequently seen, especially on old pasture-land links, where the greens have often been forged from the original sod, entailing the constant and tedious process of cutting out the coarse grasses and weeds, and resulting in a more or less unsatisfactory sward. 'Golf is not agriculture,' as every beginner knows; but that is no reason why adequate compensation should not be made to the soil for the continual 'cropping' of the 'iron stock' of the groundsman.

The principal constituents of plant-food required by grasses, and of which most soils are liable to run short, are nitrogen, phosphoric acid, potash, and lime. Clay soils, however, usually hold sufficient potash, and of course chalk soils will not require lime. Strong nitrogenous manures, such as nitrate of soda, must be applied with discrimination. Grasses respond very quickly to them, and grow so rapidly that the turf becomes hollow. Guano is one of the best forms in which to apply nitrogen. Phosphoric acid may be supplied in dissolved bones, superphosphate, or basic slag (Thomas's phosphate powder), all of which also provide lime; and muriate of potash and kainit are the usual forms in which potash is used. Although phosphatic and potassic manures are a great help in the production of a close turf, clovers take undue advantage of them, and judgment must be exercised in their application. If too large a proportion of these fertilisers is used, clovers will soon become predominant and grasses will be crowded out. A safe plan is to rely on a good compound manure such as Sutton's A 1 Lawn Manure, which contains all the essentials in suitable proportions. Farm-yard manure is slower in its action, but it supplies all that is required. The chief objection to its use is that it necessitates the laying up of the greens, and on links where these are not duplicated artificials are found more convenient. However, if it can be applied, it is important that it should be in a well-rotted and finely divided state, and spread very evenly over the surface during the autumn or winter if possible. With the help of rains such manure will disappear in a surprisingly short time, and very little litter will remain to be brushed off when the green is again brought into play.

For the above observations, which can scarcely fail to be of the greatest value to all interested in the laying out and up-keep of greens, I am indebted to the kindness and the science of Messrs. Sutton & Sons, the famous seedsmen of

Reading. To only too many of those who read them they are likely to appear in the nature of something like a revelation. The ordinary golfer is only too apt to consider grass seed as grass seed simply, without any discrimination of its different kinds and perhaps without knowledge that any such difference exists. The eyes of such a one may be widely opened by Messrs. Sutton & Sons' remarks. Especially to be noted, I think, is the stress that their paper lays on the wisdom and ultimate economy of preparing the ground thoroughly before any sowing of grass seed is attempted. This is a point that is very generally neglected by our links gardeners. Scarcely less valuable are their remarks on the comparative value of turfing and sowing—provided the latter be properly done—and their balance of opinion in favour of the more economical sowing. Their paper, I hope, will be of the greatest use, but by way of supplementing such advice it is often the best of economy to get an expert in such matters to pay a visit to a green on which the growth of good turf presents a problem hard to solve. As an instance of its value I may quote the case of a well-known green near London where the executive were at the pains of having such an expert opinion. His advice was to sow with two principal kinds of grass; the one kind, he said, would grow up quickly, and, though of a coarse nature, would provide some sort of surface for play immediately; but after a lapse of some three years the finer kind would begin to assert a mastery over the coarse, would eat it up, and by degrees produce the turf that is the golfer's ideal. I may add that his prophecies were very fairly fulfilled; but this instance is only cited to show the astonishing secrets—entirely hidden from the plain man—that the expert may have in his keeping.

SUPPLEMENTARY REMARKS BY WILLIAM FERNIE OF TROON

To supplement the foregoing instructions of Messrs. Sutton & Sons, I thought it would be well to hear what an

experienced practical man had to say on the subject, and knowing that Willie Fernie had been very successful in his treatment of the purely seaside greens of Prestwick and Troon—whereas Messrs. Sutton & Sons would deal with soils of every kind indifferently—I asked Fernie for some information on the subject, and he very kindly responded with the following, that he calls 'a few simple hints on the keeping and nursing of golf greens.' 'The treatment as described has been applied at Troon, as well as at Prestwick and Machrihanish, with capital results, and now' (that is, early in March) 'is the time to apply it, before the spring growth begins.

'One ton of the following mixture will be ample for eighteen greens—twelve hundredweight of genuine dissolved bones, six hundredweight of bone meal, and two hundredweight of superphosphates, along with one load of sand and soil in equal proportions for each green, to be well rubbed in with back of rake, or brushed in.

'For iron cuts and deep cups a sprinkling of good rye grass seed, covered over with a patch of soil and sand, will be found a grand cure. Prestwick has been treated thus for some time, and cuts are few and far between. I would recommend this treatment to be applied when there is a likelihood of wet weather, say about the end of July or beginning of August.

'On no account employ the fine grasses often used for this purpose. It is simply a waste of time and money, as I know by experience. When struck by a club or walked over, it gets torn out by the roots. Nothing beats the rye grass or clovers for strong roots.'

To these simple and plainly intelligible suggestions I would add the observation that Fernie is writing from the west coast of Scotland, where 'there is a likelihood of wet weather' at the end of July or beginning of August. The west coast, as we all know, is under a special dispensation in the matter of wet weather. Perhaps another season might seem more

likely to bring rain in other parts; but the date of applying this treatment must necessarily be a matter of local option.

Some of our inland putting greens are greatly injured by the worm casts that are continually being thrown up on them. I know no green where this evil has been more effectually dealt with than at Malvern, by the application of a solution that is poured on the greens from a watering can, with the result that the worms in a few minutes come to the surface and can be swept off. I am not sure that I am at liberty to publish the composition of this solution, but a letter on the subject to the Malvern professional would, I am sure, receive a courteous and valuable answer. It appears to be a far better method of dealing with the ubiquitous worm than any argument in the form of rolling or sweeping.

As a final contribution to this all-important subject of the up-keep of links, I would append a useful letter taken from the 'Field' of March 1898, on the 'Planting of Blowing Sand.'

'I have read the remarks on this subject which have appeared in the "Field," and in an extensive experience of fixing blowing sands I find there is only one way of dealing with them. Many experiments were tried. One spring ten bushels of broom seed and ten bushels of gorse seed were sown on a large bare patch where the sand was gradually creeping on to the meadow land adjoining, and threatening to interfere with the traffic on the main Great Western line. I never saw a single plant from the twenty bushels, as some part of the surface treated was removed by the wind soon after sowing, and the seed removed, while on another an addition of sand to the depth of a foot or more completely prevented the seed from germinating. At the same time there were many extensive patches of bent (Ammophila arundinacea) growing on the mounds of sand close by. This flowered and seeded freely, seed was collected from it and sown also, but the sand shifted so much on the surface that the young plants failed to become established, and the result

was not encouraging. It was clearly shown that seed-sowing of any kind was a failure. In the following autumn a start was made in digging up some of the Ammophila, planting it on the bare surfaces. It was not all removed, as this would have loosened the mounds, but where it was growing thickly about half of it was thinned out. Plenty of roots was secured with the plants, which were divided into small handfuls and planted about three feet apart. A strong iron-pointed dibble was used in planting; there was a crossbar on this for the foot to push it in. This was twelve inches up from the point, and each hole was one foot deep. The lower end of the roots was pushed down to that depth, and the sand was pressed against them with the foot. In some parts the surface was blown off to a depth of six inches. Had this been seeded as formerly, it would have been hopelessly upset, but the roots being down one foot there was still plenty of them under the sand to insure growth. On other pieces the sand was deposited by the wind on the top of the recently planted grass, but they were not wholly hidden, and as the spring came round new growth was pushed up freely, and all proved that neither a deposit of sand nor the removal of it interfered to any extent with the success of the plants. This was most satisfactory; only a few acres were planted on that occasion, and by the following autumn the bent had grown so well that it was decided to plant on an extensive scale and in a systematic manner. A number of men and boys were put on. They planted from October till March. This was repeated for several winters, until over 1,000 acres were planted. That was fifteen years ago, and to-day all that was bare then is a dense mat of grass, and affords food and cover to hares and rabbits innumerable. Now had I thousands of acres to deal with I would adopt no other system but this. Putting down brushwood, as I see one correspondent suggests, is a bad plan. Previous to either sowing or planting the sands in question the brushwood was tried. It was put in rows here and there to prevent the sand from being blown

landwards. The result was that the sand accumulated behind it till it reached the top of the brush, then it was blown onwards. By-and-by the brush decayed, when the whole bank of sand it had intercepted was set at liberty, and an extra lot of land was covered by it. Any temporary stoppage of the sand is useless; it is only by getting a surface of vegetation and preventing the sand blowing at all that good results follow. I found, too, that where the brushwood had decayed it left a fungus deposit behind it, which prevented the bent from growing so robustly as in the pure sand.'

'M.'

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